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THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

VOL III.

(NEW SERIES.)

Keep your mind always open to receive Truth, and never set limits to your own improvement. Be always ready to hear what may be objected even against your favourite Opinions, and those which have had longest Possession of your Assent. And if there should be any new and uncontrolable Evidence brought against these old or beloved Sentiments, do not wink your eyes fast upon the Light, but part with any thing for the Sake of Truth. Remember when you overcome an Error you gain Truth; the Victory is on your side, and the advantage is all your own. DR. WATTS.

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PREFACE.

THE Third Volume of the New Series of the Christian Reflector is now presented to the Public.

The Editor has to regret his disappointment in not having been able to receive the *Revue Protestante*, the state of the Press in France having been such, that any, and all works, offensive to the eyes and ears of a priest-ridden monarch, and a bigoted court, have been strangled in their birth.

To his Correspondents and Subscribers, the Editor offers his acknowledgements, and hopes to meet with a continuance of their favors.

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Communications on both the Doctrines and Duties of Christianity are respectfully solicited.—Papers on the subject of "Natural Religion" will be acceptable, such, in particular, as are calculated to lead the mind of the young to read that book to advantage, which is every day and every hour open to their view; and by which they may be taught to look "through Nature up to Nature's God." The real Christian perceives, that the God of Nature and of the Gospel is the same being; the King of the Universe is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God and Father also of his disciples and followers, and

> "The voice that rolls the stars along
> Spake all the promises."

Liverpool, 1st December, 1827.

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THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 25. NEW SERIES *Price 4½d.* JANUARY, 1, 1827.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

THE DYING CONFIDENCE OF JESUS.

MATT. XXVII. 46.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.

The New Testament writers represent Jesus, as the Christ, the Son of God. They not only describe him as the messenger of the grace and mercy of God; as the revealer of his mind and will to mankind; but also, as an example of piety, of moral excellence, of benevolence to his brethren of mankind, of compassion, of pity, and even of forgiveness to his enemies. He is held up as an example of patient resignation to the will of God; of fortitude in the midst of cruel and bitter sufferings, and of hope and confidence in his God in his dying hour. Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the ignominy, and is set down at the right hand of God, as the reward of his obedience.

From the exclamation of Jesus on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Two classes of men have regarded Jesus with widely different sentiments. The unbelievers in christianity say, that he died in despair as one forsaken of his God; that he showed much less fortitude than the martyrs in similar sufferings and death; and therefore he cannot be looked to as fit to be the leader of, and exemplar to men.

On the other hand the *pseudo* orthodox represent him as bearing the load of punishment and of damnation due to the sinful race of men; that God deserted him in this hour of his trial; that the exclamation is a full proof of it, and of his being

made to drink of the cup of the fierceness of eternal wrath and vengeance, in the place and stead of elect sinners.

Had the spirit of Jesus sunk in this painful hour, all it would prove, would be that like his brethren of the human race, he was sensible of pain, and liable to its effect when it became too intense for human endurance; it would prove nothing in favor of the unbeliever or of the orthodox.

But there is a view we may take of the subject which will remove it out of the hands of both parties.

Properly to appreciate the situation of Jesus we must carefully attend to the circumstances related by the evangelists. (See Matt. xxvii. 39—44.)

In the midst of all the reproaches and blasphemies uttered against him, Jesus appeals to his heavenly Father; he exclaims My God, my God, why, or wherefore all this bitter scorn and contempt? Why am I thus treated as one accursed and forsaken of God? Hast thou forsaken me? Is it as these men say? Am I abandoned of Thee? No!

Here we may observe that, according to the genius of the Hebrew language, an interrogation is the strongest mode of denying; we may therefore fairly conclude that this exclamation so far from being the language of despondency, was the language of confidence and of triumph, and this sense is fully confirmed by his last sentence; Father into thy hands I commend my spirit; into thy hands my Father and my God, who hast never forsaken me, never left me without thy presence and approbation.

Jesus was always the beloved of his Father, he is styled by way of eminence his beloved Son, in whom he was always well pleased. Also, the crown of immortality, and the sceptre which his Father has given him are the reward of his obedience. It would be an impeachment of the divine equity, to suppose he would abandon the most innocent of our race, and cast off him who was always the object of his delight.

I submit the above, Mr. Editor, to the attention, and animadversion of yourself and your readers, and am,

Yours respectfully, EUSEBIUS.

ON THE CLAUSE IN THE LORD'S PRAYER,

"Lead us not into Temptation."

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

IN your Number for December, p. 284, I promised to notice the communication of your correspondent Y on the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "lead us not into temptation;" which appeared in your preceding number, p. 255. With your permission, I would now proceed to redeem my pledge.

And, in the first place, I observe, that, in my previous remarks, p. 207, I stated nothing positively. I did not even venture to give an opinion of my own; I offered only suggestions; I merely threw out hints, which might induce others to take up the subject, and solve the difficulty with which it is environed.

Your correspondent, I am sorry to say, has not made the attempt. We cannot say he is like the dog in the manger; will neither do, nor let others do. But this, I think, we may say of him; he sees the perplexity of our situation, but offers no helping hand; he is not satisfied with what has been done, nor will he do any thing, apparently, himself. He has *objected*, and that is *all*. He must pardon me, if I say, it would have been more generous, to have attempted at least, a solution of the difficulty which was admitted to exist. If we find fault, we should endeavour to amend. If we object, it is but fair and candid to supply something better, or to confess that we cannot. Objecting for mere objection sake, is a mode of proceeding which every liberal disputant, and every sincere lover of truth must deprecate. Tell us not that we are groping in darkness, if you will not furnish us with a light. Taunt us not with going astray, if you will not direct us into the right path. For what would such conduct merit, but the imputation of unfeeling levity in the distresses of others.

I am not, however, willing to suppose that your correspondent Y could act from such a feeling; though his communication, in my opinion, bears too near a resemblance to it; for it is nothing but a string of objections from beginning to end.

But to the question under consideration. And I begin by stating, that I do not rest much on the argument derived from the elliptical form of the Lord's Prayer. (*) But supposing it to be elliptical, should we not supply such ellipses as are most consistent with the divine perfections, and the tenour of the sacred scriptures? And I contend, arguing from both, that God does not tempt men in an evil sense. This I shall endeavour afterwards to prove. At present, I shall take it for granted; and, assuming this point, I conclude, that the meaning of the prayer, in every part, must be in perfect accordance with it; consequently, if an ellipse is to be supplied at all in the clause in question, it must be such a one as is perfectly in unison with the first leading principle.

But I will waive the argument founded on the elliptical form of the prayer, and take the clause, "lead us not into temptation," as it stands.

And first, there is a very material difference between *leading* into temptation, and being the *author* of temptation. A father may lead a son into scenes where temptation may present itself before him, in order to try him; that is, that his good principles may be exercised, and his virtues strengthened. And that father would be thought to act wisely; provided, he kept his eye upon his son, and did not fail to warn him of the evil and point out the bitter consequences which it involved. And he would be thought, too, to act from the purest motives; for the preservation of his son from evil hereafter, and the perfection of his virtue, would be the objects which he would have in view. The son conscious of his weakness, and fearing the danger, might very naturally entreat not to be exposed to such a trial. "lead me not, father, into temptation; but deliver me, save me from evil." The prayer might spring up spontaneously in the breast. It would be such as true filial piety would dictate. And while it would reflect honour upon the son, it would convey no meaning to cast the least imputation upon the father.

(*) *Y*'s division of the prayer is, I think incorrect. He omits petition entirely; but with the exception of the concluding ascription, the prayer is altogether a petitionary one.

The clause, therefore under consideration, may be thus explained, in complete accordance with the divine perfections, and the spirit of genuine piety.

Besides, to "*lead into* temptation," implies that temptation *previously exists*. It is in *being*, before the act of leading commences; therefore, it does not *originate*, or at least, does not *necessarily* originate with him who leads into it. The clause does not say, "do not *thou* tempt us," but "*lead* us not into temptation." That is, "if it be consistent with thy will, may we not be led into scenes where temptation exists."

That God does not tempt men in an evil sense, or, rather, does not *lead* them into temptation in an evil sense, must I think be readily admitted; if it be granted that he is *just*. For would it not be a violation of all justice; would it not be complete wantonness, to entice—to ensnare us into evil, and then punish us for the commission of it? And can that righteous and benevolent Being, that kind and loving Father, who is represented in the christian scriptures as infinitely perfect, be capable of acting in such a manner? No, impossible. It would be contrary to his nature to do so.

Then, he does not lead us into temptation in an evil sense; and there is nothing in the clause in the least calculated to prevent us from using it from our inmost souls.

These remarks will receive confirmation, from attending in the next place, to the sacred scriptures. Our Saviour represents evil as proceeding from man, and not God. "A good man, out of the good treasure of the *heart*, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things." "Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man." Matt. xii. 35. xv. 19, 20. He says, "the son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to *his* works.'. Matt xvi. 27. He speaks of his Father as "holy" and righteous;" and says, that the "pure in heart" only can "see him." John xvii. 11, 25. Matt v. 8. Consequently, he would not express in the prayer, which he has given us as a

model for our daily prayers, a sentiment in the least inconsistent with these great leading principles, which run through the whole of his religion. And, therefore, he would not use the word "temptation" in an evil sense; and he could not mean that God was the *author* of that temptation, when he directed us to pray, "not to be *led* into it."

Perhaps; the clause may be illustrated by his words on other occasions. Certainly, he ought to be permitted to explain himself; and his general strain of teaching ought by all means to be taken into consideration, and every thing that is apparently difficult should be interpreted accordingly. A fairer mode of proceeding, I think cannot be adopted, or one more consistent with the elucidation of truth. While, on the contrary, if we act on any other principle, we shall violate all just rules of criticism, and be led continually into a labyrinth of perplexity and inextricable mazes. The words to which I allude, are the following. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Matt. xxvi. 41. John xvii, 15. Here the difficulty is solved; if we are to admit the fair and just principle, that the words of Christ, as of every other religious instructor, are mutually to explain and illustrate each other. In the first instance, we are taught by precept, to "pray, that we enter not into temptation." And in the second, we are taught by example, to "pray, that we may be kept from evil."

The clause, therefore, under consideration, should be used in this sense; as it must have been so used by Christ; unless we make him inconsistent with himself, and set one part of his teaching in opposition to another; which ought never for a moment to be admitted.

To complete the argument, we have only I think, to turn to James ch. i. 2, 3, 12, 13, 14. In these verses, the word is used in *two* different senses; in a good sense ss signifying *trial*; and in a bad sense, as signifying *enticing into evil.*

When exercised by the former, we are pronounced blessed, and exhorted to rejoice, as it will contribute ultimately to the

improvement of the religious character. With respect to the latter, we are warned against imputing it to God.

It therefore follows, I think inevitably from all that has been offered, that the clause in question is used only in a good sense as signifying *trial*, to strengthen and improve our virtues.

But why, then, do we pray not to be led into temptation, if it contributes thus ultimately to our good? For the same reason, that we naturally wish to avoid that "affliction which yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness;" Heb. xii. 11:—"it is not for the present joyous, but grievous." Virtue, from its sensitiveness, alarmed and fearful, shrinks from the conflict; and prays that, if possible, the cup may pass away from it.

Your correspondent however, says, p. 255, that "the substitution of *trial* for *temptation* is not satisfactory, even if the terms are synonymous. Indeed! Is not, then, every imputation removed from the divine character, when we view him as leading us into *trial*, for the purpose of improving and perfecting our virtues. And whether it has not been shewn that the word *temptation*, in the case in question, is synonymous with *trial*, I leave to the candid and impartial to judge. Certainly as I before observed, p. 208, *Wakefield* has so rendered it; and *his* name is itself a host.

On the supposition, that the word *temptation* signifies *trial*, I suggested, p. 207, whether the clause under consideration, might not be of "a similar signification to the prayer of our Saviour in the garden;—'O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, &c.'" To this *Y* subjoins, p. 256, "he was praying to be delivered from that cup, that testimony of blood, which he saw before him." Doubtless he was; but was there no temptation in this? were not his faith, his constancy, his firmness, his fortitude, his devotedness, his love to God and man, put to the *test*? were they not in this "testimony of blood," severely *tried?* "I have a baptism to be baptized with," he exclaimed, Luke xii. 50; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" In the prospect of those temptations which try our virtue, and engage it in severe conflict, may we not, under the influence of somewhat similar feelings, pour out our souls in

prayer to God, and say, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil?" And are we not, when doing so, acting agreeably to the dictates of reason, the example of Jesus Christ, and the scriptures of truth?

A UNITARIAN CONVERT.

P. S. I would beg leave to add the following Errata to my last communication. p. 227, for "*principle* read *privilege*, &c." p. 277, for "*of a hue*, read *opaque*" p. 282, for "*any* good, &c." "read *our* good, &c." p. 283, for "most *singular*" read "most *irregular*, &c."

ON ORDINATION SERVICES.

"How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?—PAUL."

(Continued from Vol. ii. p. 270.)

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR,

I concluded my former communication, by observing that the regular ordination of dissenting ministers might have many advantages. For if it would not give them a claim to rank with their mitred brethren of the establishment, or even if scorned by them they might exercise what authority had been committed to them over their own flocks, and if they could not be lords, they might be lordlings over God's heritage.

To this consummation however we have not yet arrived, and reverting to the service as it is now conducted, by whatever name called, and whatever apparent liberality characterized, that service is founded on an objectionable principle. This principle was openly but very unguardedly expressed at Bolton;—the recognition of the young minister by his brethren. This appears to be a fundamental point, whatever excellence therefore may be discovered; in the various recent ordinations, as they are called, the foundation upon which they are based is unjustifiable. It is granting an unrequired, and uncontrollable ascendency. And this is much to be dreaded. There are many amongst us, and those too who from wealth and respectability are highly influential members, who have such veneration for the Great Diana of York, that a minister is barely tolerated who springs from any other source. The pupils of Doddridge and Belsham, and the students of Warrington being duly crammed with classic lore, are regarded as regularly educated ministers. But this class will in a

few years be extinct, and then if we must judge from the signs of the times, a York student only must be elected to the vacant pulpit, or the plague spot will be upon it. We appear to be gradually verging to this state of things, and even now I query, if the learned professors of Manchester College, York, would be very assiduous in travelling about the kingdom to assist at Ordination services, save on behalf of their own pupils. Suppose some country congregation, not very opulent, were to choose for their Pastor some pious worthy man, no classic indeed and no linguist, but familiarly acquainted with the Bible in his mother tongue, and a practical illustrator of the power of the Gospel. Suppose him though unable to boast of academical honors,—setting an honorable example of honest industry, by ministering with his own hands to his necessities;—if such a character was unanimously elected by such a congregation, from the cobler's stall, or the weaver's loom to be a spiritual teacher. I query whether York would send representatives to his ordination; or the neighboring or distant ministers crowd to this edifying instructive and highly useful service, to recognize the election of the congregation, to dedicate him to the holy office, to sanctify him for the work, to present the right hand of fellowship to the stranger, and acknowledge and embrace him as a brother? I trow not.

I protest therefore against this much be-praised service, because it concedes to the Ministers the power of recognizing or not as they please the admission of persons into the ministry. Its tendency is to make them a distinct and separate body, for aught I know, more sacred and reverend than the common people. It will place in their hands, the power of effectually marking any man who may be displeasing to them, by discountenancing his election, and by their absence, from his ordination refusing their recognition. If the congregation persist in their choice, he and they would become proscribed, shut out from all intercourse with fellow professors and to be insolated and cut off from the connection. This conclusion certainly will not follow as the effect of one or two disconnected ordinations, but it should be recollected that if these services be so useful and so necessary it indubitably follows, that they should be universal, and if universal, these consequences will certainly result. The liberty of our Societies would vanish into thin air; the ministers by their negative power merely would control the deliberations of the people and become as absolute as the Methodist conference in providing occupants for vacant pulpits;—and to escape their thraldom, it would be necessary to be dissevered from the connection—and thereby forego the pleasure arising from reciprocal acts of kindness, mutual counsels, the interchange of friendly offices, and the genial intercourse of fellowship and brotherly love.

Let Ordinations then be watched with unceasing jealousy, as having a tendency under a fictitious semblance, covertly to intro-

duce amongst us ecclesiastical domination; as affording admission, for all that bigotry, and encouragment for that insatiable craving for power, for which conclaves of Priests, have been universally and correctly distinguished.

A DISSENTER.

THOUGHTS ON ENTERING UPON THE NEW YEAR.

"*We spend our years as a tale that is told. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*"—Psalm 90.

As it is good for the weary traveller now and then to halt on his journey, and look back on the progress he has made, and the fatigues he has overcome—so, it is good for the christian pilgrim sometimes to pause, to reflect on the advances he has made in the journey of life, and look forward to the state of his high destination. Especially at a fresh division of his existence, the commencement of a new year, it is good for him to take the lamp of meditation, aad retire to the closet of his heart, for the purpose of honestly making up his accounts with heaven, and faithfully examining his condition for eternity.

Another of the years of our mortality is numbered and finished; with all its joys, its sorrows, its employments and its affairs;—it is gone, never, never to return! And how has it been spent? How much of it has passed away in eating, in drinking, in sleeping, and in providing for the body? How great a portion of it has been occupied in vanities ond cares? How many of its hours have been employed in idleness and folly? How much of it has been devoted to the service of sin? How many pious resolutions has it witnessed broken? How many precious opportunities and talents has it beheld neglected? How much valuable time has it seen misemployed?—O let the occurences of the year pass under a faithful review; and may the remembrance of our failings humble us in the dust! But, too many of us, alas! endeavour to erase them from our memory, not considering that "God requireth that which is past." Eccles. iii. 15.

Thousands of our fellow mortals, who witnessed with us the commencement of the past year, and who were perhaps, far more deserving characters than ourselves, have been cut off by the ruthless hand of the king of terrors, and now moulder in the recesses of the gloomy grave. Their sun of existence set, and themselves overtaken by the shadows of that "long night in which no man can work,"—their day of preparation for the future is past. We, in mercy, are a little longer spared, to redeem our mispent time and prepare to meet our God. O let not this mercy be extended to us in vain; but repenting of our past folly, let us solemnly review our covenant with God by prayer and supplication, and resolve, in his strength, that for the future our lives shall be devoted to him. Let us enter on the new year with a determination that it shall witness a change in our dispositions, views, and conduct, wherever a change is necessary, that if we are permitted to see its conclusion, we may review it with that inward joy and satisfaction of heart, which the world can neither give nor take away.

Let us not forget that the lapse of another year has brought us nearer to that awful hour in which we shall have to exchange world for world. As the flowing stream is lost in the briny ocean, so will the short period of our existence be swallowed up in the immeasurable deep of eternity; and as death will soon compel us to leave this world, we ought to secure for ourselves "a retreat in the sanctuary of life and immortality." The year on which we have just entered may witness our departure hence: it will see the young and the old, the healthy and the weak cut off and added to the number of the dead. Who of us can say, "it will not be *my* fate?" O let this alarming consideration awaken us to *immediate* watchfulness; that when the Lord cometh he may find us with our lamps burning prepared to meet him! Every moment brings us *nearer* to the verge of an everlasting world. God only knows how soon the "angel on the pale horse" may carry us hence, "The *present* time alone is ours: yesterday has lived and died, and to-morrow is not yet born:—we have therefore, only to-day to call our own. "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might;

for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." Eccles. ix. 10.

In anticipating the probable events of the year that lies before us, let not too much anxiety fill our breasts; but let us be prepared to find it chequered with pleasures and disappointments, and with seriousnes and attention to learn a lesson of wisdom from the mutability of its scenes. Whilst we act well our parts in those stations of life in which it has pleased our merciful Father to place us, let us look forward with the eye of faith, to that "better land," where the periods of our being; where our existence shall no longer have its seasons marked by the revolution of sun, moon and stars; where we shall never be moved by the changes of a fluctuating world; but where, with the countless throng of the faithful, we shall be supremely and eternally blest.

Christian Reader! suffer a fellow mortal who wishes thee every blessing, to entreat that thou wilt lay these things to heart." Prepare, (O immediately prepare,) to meet thy God!" "Set thy affections on things above, and not on things on the earth." The gaudy flowers of earthly felicity may allure thee, but remember they contain a worm in every bud and will quickly wither: they die, and are thrown on the common heap of "vanity and vexation of spirit." The plant of religion alone is immortal. The fragrance of its blossoms will invigorate thine heart, and thou shalt enjoy it for ever in the Paradise of God!

Marshfield. M.

UNITARIANISM.

One Hundred Scriptural Arguments in favour of Unitarianism.

(A pamphlet, lately published at Boston, America.)

UNITARIAN Christians believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God and the Saviour of men. They believe in the divinity of his mission and in the divinity

of his doctrines. They believe that the Gospel, which he proclaimed, came from God: that the knowledge it imparts, the morality it enjoins, the spirit it breathes, the acceptance it provides, the promises it makes, the prospects it exhibits, the rewards it proposes, the punishments it threatens, all proceed from the great Jehovah. But they do not believe, that Jesus Christ is the supreme God. They believe that, though exalted far above all other created intelligences, he is a being distinct from, inferior to, and dependent upon, the Father Almighty. For this belief they urge, among other reasons, the following arguments from the Scriptures.

I. Because Jesus Christ is represented by the sacred writers to be as distinct a being from God the Father as one man is distinct from another. "It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. *I am one* who bear witness of myself, and *the Father* that sent me beareth witness of me," John viii, 17, 18.

II. Because he not only never said that himself was God, but, on the contrary, spoke of the *Father*, who sent him as God, and as the *only God*. "This is life eternal, that they might know *Thee the only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John xvii, 3, This language our Saviour used in solemn prayer to "*his* Father, and *our* Father."

III. Because he is declared in unnumbered instances, to be the *Son of God*. "And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is *my beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii, 17. Can a son be *coeval* and the *same* with his father?

IV. Because he is styled *the Christ*, or *the anointed of God*. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," Acts x, 38. Is he who anoints the same with him who is anointed?

V. Because he is represented as a *Priest*. "Consider the * * * *high Priest* of our profession, Christ Jesus," Heb. iii, 1. The office of a priest is to *minister to God*. Christ, then, as a priest, cannot be God.

VI. Because Christ is *Mediator* between the "One God," and "men." "For there is one God and one *Mediator between God and men*, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii, 5.

VII. Because as the *Saviour* of men he *was sent by the Father.* "And we have seen and do testify that *the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour* of the world." 1 John iv, 14.

VIII. Because he is an *apostle, appointed by God.* "Consider the apostle, * * * Christ Jesus, who was faithful to *him that appointed* him." Heb. iii, 1, 2.

IX. Because Christ is represented as our *intercessor* with God. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also *maketh intercession for us,*" Rom. viii, 34.

X. Because the *head* of Christ is *God.* "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and *the head of Christ is God,*" 1 Cor xi, 3.

XI. Because in the same sense, in which we are said to belong to Christ, *Christ* is said to *belong to God.* "And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," 1 Cor iii, 23.

XII. Because Christ says, "My Father is greater than all," John x, 29. Is not the Father, then, greater than the Son?

XIII. Because he affirms, in another connexion, and without the least qualification, "*My Father is greater than I,*" John xiv, 28.

XIV. Because he virtually *denies that he is God,* when he exclaims, "why callest thou *me good?* There is none good but *one,* that is God," Matth. xix, 17.

XV. Because our Saviour, after having said, "I and my Father are one," gives his disciples distinctly to understand that he did not mean, *one in substance,* equal in power and glory, but *one* only in *affection* and *design,* &c. as clearly appears from the prayer he offers to his Father in their behalf,—"that *they all may be one;* as *thou,* Father, art *in me,* and *I in thee,* that they also may be *one in us,*" John xvii, 21.

XVI. Because the *Father* is called the God of *Christ,* as he is the God of *Christians.* "Jesus saith unto her, * * * go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to *my God* and *your God,*" John xx, 17.

XVII. Because an apostle says of GOD, in distinction from the "Lord Jesus Christ," that HE is the "*only* Potentate," and that HE "*only* hath immortality," 1 Tim. vi, 15, 16.

XVIII. Because it is the express declaration of the same apostle, that the *Father* is the *one God*, and there *is none other*. "Though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) yet *to us there is but one God, the Father*, of whom are all things," 1 Cor. viii, 5, 6.

XIX. Because the power which Christ possessed was, as himself affirmed, *given* to him. "All power is *given* unto me," &c, Matth. xxviii, 18.

XX. Because he positively denies himself to be the author of his miraculous works, but refers them to the *Father*, or the holy spirit of God. "The *Father* that dwelleth in me, *he* doeth the works," John xiv, 10. "If I cast out devils *by the spirit of God*," &c, Matth. xii. 28.

XXI. Because he distinctly states, that these works bear witness, not to *his own power*, but that the *Father had sent him*, John v. 36.

XXII. Because he expressly affirms, that the works were done, not in his own, but in his *Father's name*, John x, 25.

XXIII. Because he asserts, that "him hath God the *Father sealed*;" i. e. *to God the Father* he was indebted for his credentials, John vi, 27.

XXIV. Because he declares, that he is not the author of his own doctrine. "My doctrine is *not mine*, but his that sent me," John vii. 16, 17.

XXV. Because he represents himself as having been *instructed by the Father*. "*As my Father hath taught me*, I speak these things," John viii, 28.

XXVI. Because he refers *invariably* to the *Father* as the *origin* of the *authority* by which he spoke and acted, "the Father hath *given* to the Son authority," &c. John v, 26, 27.

XXVII. Because he acknowledges his dependence on his heavenly Father for example and direction in all his doings. "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do," John v, 19. "The Father loveth the Son, and *sheweth* him all things, that himself doeth," John v. 20.

XXVIII. Because he says, "*I seek not mine own glory*; but *I honor my Father*," John viii. 49, 50.

XXIX. Because he declares, "if I honor *myself*, my honor is nothing; it is *my Father* that honoreth me," John viii, 54.

XXX. Because an apostle declares, that in Christ dwelt all fulness, *because it so pleased the Father*, Col. i, 19.

XXXI. Because Christ is uniformly represented in the scriptures, not as the *primary*, but the *intermediate*, cause of all things relating to our salvation. "*One God, the Father, of whom* are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom* are all things, and we by *him*," 1 Cor. viii, 6.

XXXII. Because he declares, "I am not come of myself," into the world, "for I proceeded forth and came from God," John viii. 42, vii, 28. "Jesus knowing * * * that he *came from God and went to God*," &c. John xiii, 3.

XXXIII. Because he affirms, that he *had not the disposal* of the highest *places* in his own kingdom. "To sit on my right hand and on my left *is not mine to give*, but it shall be given to them for whom it is *prepared of my Father*." Matth. xx, 23.

XXXIV. Because our Saviour, referring his disciples to a future time, when they would understand more accurately concerning him, expressly declares that *then* they would know him to be *entirely dependent* upon the Father. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, [i. e. crucified him,] then shallye know that I am he, [i. e. the Messiah,] and that *I do nothing of myself;* but as my *Father hath taught me*, I speak these things," John viii, 28.

XXXV. Because our Saviour always professed to have *no will of his own;* but to be ever entirely *guided* and *governed* by the will of his heavenly Father. "For I came down from heaven, not to do *mine own will*, but the will of *him* that sent me," John vi, 38.

XXXVI. Because he expressly denies that he is possessed of the divine attribute of *independent existence*. "As the living Father hath sent me, and *I live by the Father*," &c, John vi, 57.

XXXVII. Because he expressly disclaims the possession of the divine attribute of *underived existence*. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself." John v, 26.

XXXVIII. Because he positively denies, that he is possessed of the divine attribute of *omnipotence.* "I can of mine own self do nothing," John v, 30.

XXXIX. Because he expressly disclaims the possession of the divine attribute of *omniscience.* "But of that day, and that hour, *knoweth* no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither *the Son, but my Father only,*" Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii, 32.

XL. Because Christ is said in the Scriptures to have been "*tempted of the devil,*" Matt, iv, 1. But "*God* cannot be tempted with evil."

XLI. Because it is related of our Saviour, that "he continued all night in *prayer* to God," Luke vi, 12. Why should Christ thus pray, if he himself were God?

(To be concluded in our next)

UNITARIANS AND DEISTS.

"Some of the Unitarians are now showing their intimate relationship with the Deists, by receiving them into their churches.—So we learn from the Monthly Repository, the organ of that body."

New Baptist Magazine, August, 1826.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR

THE four first paragraphs of the article entitled the "Monuments of Christianity" in your Number for October last, signed "Alpha?" are so much in unison with my own views of the high and sacred origin of Christianity, and of the low dark pagan origin of that system, the first-born of Infidelity, called "Philosophical Christianity;" but which to me appears more like philosophical paganism, than genuine christianity, that I am emboldened by their appearance in your pages to send for insertion in the Christian Reflector, a communication which was written some months since, in answer to an article in the Monthly Repository, signed W. J., Liverpool, on the much agitated, much misrepresented, and ill-managed subject of the impropriety and

inconsistency of the union of Deists with Christians, in church management, and church membership. This subject has been much agitated in the work before mentioned, but unhappily finished without coming to a point, like Dr. Johnson's Rasselas without bringing any thing to a conclusion.

On my reading the article signed W. J. and being struck with profound astonishment at some of the bold positions laid down by that writer, and which, if capable of proof, would in my opinion, most certainly subvert christianity, as a divine system, altogether. As a firm believer in the divine origin of christianity, as one desirous of defending, however humbly, that faith, which I believe, was once delivered to the saints; I wished to call on W. J. for the proof of what to me appeared, and do still appear, his strange assertions.

Under feelings of deep interest. I penned the remarks which will appear in my following communications, submitted them to the inspection of some highly valued friends, who were pleased to consider them as an answer to W. J.

The communication was thought not admissible into the pages of the "Repository," because it was considered "too long for an almost exhausted subject." I was in a measure disappointed on seeing this notice, as the persons to whom I had submitted it for inspection, were some of them acceptable contributors to that work.

With respect to the opposers and the opposition made in our day against genuine christianity, we wish to yield ample room, fair play, and a wide field for the exercise of their prowess. Let discussion be carried on with good temper, with arguments as hard as you please, but let no one use poisoned darts, and it is no difficult matter to see how the contest will ultimately terminate. But let not the christian turn dissembler, let not his candor for the persons of his opponents weaken his hostility to their errors. Let truth be the object for which he contends, and while he feels the genial warmth which christianity inspires, he will be able to wield the sword of the spirit to advantage if he keeps a guard over his own temper, and lets no inferior object sway his judgment.

I am aware Mr. Editor, that the following communication is deficient in point of polished sentences, in rounded periods, and rhetorical figures. It exhibits no fire of fancy, no towering flights of the imagination. It is simple and unvarnished, having nothing but truth to recommend it.

I have come to the conclusion to break that into several, which originally was intented but for one communication, as I perceive you have given us a caution to be "brief." (*) The first I shall send you for your next number.

In the mean time, I remain,

Your's respectfully,

JOHN RAGLAND.

Hindley, 1826.

(*) We thank our friend J. R. for his consideration of brevity, as in so small a work as ours, compression is necessaryto enable us to have variety and our readers conceive that a greater variety would be more generally interesting.

AN ORIGINAL ANECDOTE.

(From the New York Christian Inquirer.)

A certain Divine in this city, not long since was suspected of heresy. His brethren in the ministry thought proper to appoint a committee to wait upon him and catechise him. The committee called upon him at the appointed time, and after the usual salutations on such occasions, they commenced their interrogatories; and after several questions by way of introduction to the main subject, they at length broached the all important question. "Are you," said the chairman of the committee, "a believer in the holy and ever blessed doctrine of the sacred trinity?" Indeed brethren," said the shrewd Divine, "before I answer this question either in the affirmative or negative, permit me to inquire what you mean by the doctrine of the sacred trinity? I suppose that the subject is important, and I never think it proper

to play upon words; if you will explain yourselves, I will answer you.'

"What we mean by the sacred doctrine of the trinity, is the well known doctrine of three persons in one God." "But permit me," said the Divine, "further to inquire, what ideas you attach to the word *person?* You say, the well known doctrine of three persons in one God, but you are aware that different classes of christians understand the well known phrase, *three persons in one God,* in very different senses. Explain yourselves, brethren, and I will endeavour to satisfy you on the subject." Indeed, sir, you must understand that the doctrine of the sacred trinity is a profound mystery, it is a doctrine above human reason, it cannot be explained or fully understood." "Well, brethren, if you do not understand your own question, I do not see how you can reasonably expect that I should understand it; and I am not prepared to answer any question that I do not understand. Whenever you will put your question in any form to convey intelligent ideas, I will answer it; and until this is done, I think that you would be unreasonable to press an answer.—Perhaps I believe what you would call the doctrine of the sacred trinity, and perhaps I do not. This can never be determined till your ideas of the doctrine of the sacred trinity are explained."

The committee were thunderstruck, a long pause ensued. At length, the Reverend Divine added, "I believe firmly all that the Scriptures say respecting *God our heavenly Father, his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the Holy Spirit.* But as it respects the ten thousand idle and foolish questions that have been invented in the schools, which neither the inventors nor any body else ever understood, and which only serve to play the fool with the learned, and confound the ignorant, as a minister of Jesus Christ, I have nothing to do with them. It is my business to preach the gospel, as recorded by the evangelists, illustrated in the acts of the apostles, and explained and enforced in their epistles. And provided that I and my people uuderstand our Bible, and reduce it to practice, we think that it is quite sufficient for us without any *additions or subtractions.*" The conversation here ended, and the committee retired.

S.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR,

I am glad to find that you have published, in a separate form, for the convenience of distribution, at a very cheap rate, the questions, in verse, to those who maintain the Deity of Jesus Christ," which sometime ago appeared in the Reflector. And I trust your readers will shew that they appreciate the obligation which you have thus conferred upon them, by readily availing themselves of the opportunity which you have afforded them, to banish superstition, and promote the truth.

OBSERVER.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

The Rev. W. Hincks is delivering a Course of Lectures on Sunday Evenings, in the Unitarian Chapel, Renshaw Street, Liverpool.

The following are the Subjects.

1826.

Dec. 10. On the Christian name, and the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. In answer to the Rev. A. WILSON.

„ 17. Qualifications for final Salvation.

„ 24. On the moral perfections of God, the evil of Sin, and the moral tendency of the Unitarian doctrine. In answer to the Rev. A. WILSON.

„ 31. Christ the Son of God.

1827.

Jan. 7. The love of Christ on Unitarian principles.

„ 14. The mission of Christ pre-ordained, and the accomplishment of the purpose of the Jewish law.

„ 21. Christ the Son of Man.

Feb. 4. Christ the brightness of the Father's glory.

„ 11. The death of Christ, a ransom for many.

„ 18. The honour due to Christ.

„ 25. Religion totally unconnected with civil power,

Mr. F. B. Wright is delivering a Course of Lectures on Sunday Evenings, in the Unitarian Meeting House, Hunter Street, Liverpool.

The following are the Subjects.

1826.

Dec. 3. The Right, Duty, Importance and Advantage of Free Inquiry on Religious Subjects.

,, 10. The God of Jesus the only proper Object of Religious Worship.
,, 17. The Christ of the New Testament.
,, 24. The Antichrist of the New Testament.
,, 31. The Close of the Year.

1827.

Jan. 7. The New Testament Doctrine of Faith.
,, 14. The New Testament Doctrine of Justification.
,, 21. The Scriptural Representation of Death.
,, 28. The Doctrine of the Resurrection, the only foundation of hope and assurance to man of a Future Life.
Feb. 4. The certainty of a Future Judgment, and a state of Rewards and Punishments.
,, 11. Heaven
,, 18. Hell.
,, 25. The final Restoration of all mankind to a state of purity and happiness.
Mar. 4. Recapitulation.—All the Doctrines of Christianity of a practical tendency.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

TIME.

In time's great tomb what mighty nations sleep,
Their dream-like story none is left to tell,
From its unnumber'd caverns, dark and deep,
No voice pronounces how they rose or fell.

Yet if, perchance, some favour'd record stay,
To rescue ought from time's oblivious hand,
It strongly warn us of our quick decay,
And points, determin'd, to the running sand.

What then (impervious to the with'ring arm
Which hurries man into the lethean stream,)
Is there, his heart with wond'ring love to warm,
And sweet contentment on his mind to beam.

Those heav'nly orbs which round him constant hie,
And chearful earth with her abundant stores,
Convince him there is pow'r can never die,
For God in all is seen, and man adores.

Swiftly through viewless space Earth onward rolls,
In order'd change, heav'ns brilliant gems appear,
While heat alternate gilds her icy poles,
As round its circle runs the changeful year.

And as in silent majesty she rides,
Her heav'n directed, strong and rapid race,
In shining glory through the ether glides
Her beauteous compeers in the pathless chace.

First Luna mildly sheds her neighb'ring light,
As through the year the march of time she speaks,
Winging with ceaseless speed her monthly flight,
While night's dark cloud her silvery lustre breaks.

Then beaming Venus holds her crystal course,
In peerless beauty bright'ning all the way;
And ardent Mercury with increasing force
Skirts nimbly round the dazzling orb of day.

Next fiery Mars his ruddy aspect shows,
His larger circuit coursing Earth's around;
And distant Jupiter effulgent glows,
His waist encircled, and with girdles bound.

Then stretching outward, far in space remote,
See cloudy Saturn holds his dim career;
Pale rings immense surround his dusky coat,
As 'twere to light him through his gloomy year.

And last, in deeper shade, obscurely steals
Thy planet, Herschel, through his lonely sphere;
While latent light its frugal measure deals,
As though unwilling his drear path to cheer.

These, as they roll, the life of man portray,
His cheerful morn enjoys its youthful suns,
Then mounting gaily to meridian ray,
His middle path, like his own orb, he runs.

Then gently drooping tow'rds saturnine gloom,
As chilling night with misty face appears,
His dark'ning twilight flickers o'er the tomb,
And soon grave midnight's deepest shadow wears.

Not thus are favor'd all of mortal race,
In early dawn the hope of millions flies,
And thousands find their solemn resting place
Ere morning, melting into mid-day, dies.

Nor is the number small, or quickly told
Of those, who in their strength, the zenith gain,
Who flourish proudly, as by nought control'd,
'Till death o'ertakes them, and their strength is vain.

Whilst in her latest round, the wand'ring earth
Her more than thrice-told hundred days has sped,
What countless multitudes have had their birth,
What busy tribes are number'd with the dead.

Yet though the victims in such numbers sleep
On death's cold pillow, 'neath the shrouding sod,
O'er each stiff form surviving mourners weep,
Or kiss with patience the chastising rod.

See, where with racking grief, the mother stands,
Her first-born infant to her arms is lost,
Its lovely sweetness, and its fondling hands
And playful smile, the blast of death has cross'd.

O ye, whose watchful nights, with sick'ning care
And sorrow blended, blanch the tear-worn cheek,
Ye only know that mother's deep despair,
Ye only feel what mother's heart can break.

With tearless eye, (the sluice of woe denied)
Intensely feeling, see a father's pain;
No common sorrow cuts a gash so wide,
Or closing heals, and leaves a mark so plain.

In rip'ning youth his cherish'd hope is check'd,
His vision'd joy is from his eye ball fled,
Nipt is the bud which early genius deck'd,
And its green leaves in flow'ry spring are shed.

Again behold, where, gather'd round the bier,
With quiv'ring lip, those youthful mourners stand;
In quick succession drops the scalding tear,
For here with force has fall'n the deadly brand.

On yellow autumn's verge, scarce summer o'er,
(In growth matur'd, with vigorous shoots around)
The piercing lightning, 'mid loud thunder's roar,
Rends the tall tree, and brings it to the ground.

So hither raging Typhus sent his dart,
With double aim the fiery arrow's thrown,
Ere the wing'd shaft had left the father's heart
Its barb drew forth the mother's final groan.

And shall, on these, eternal darkness frown,
Shall reason's ray which once illum'd them, die?
That God, who looks with eye of pity down,
Forbids the bitter thought and doubtful sigh.

Lo, the bright page! celestial truth sublime
Pours forth its lustre with unclouded ray;
Frail man shall trample on the shore of time,
And rise in glory to immortal day.

Liverpool. *T.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The "Plain Speaker" shall appear in our next, we could not make room for it in our present number. We shall feel obliged by a continuation of the same.

Our wish to publish as much of the American Pamphlet, entitled One hundred Scriptural arguments, &c. has obliged us to put some communications aside which would otherwise have appeared this month. We hope to bring up our arrears with Theophilus, M., and another poetic friend, in our next.

To the inquirers after "Buckminster," we are sorry to say that, owing to some particular, unforeseen circumstances, we shall not be able to give that work to the public before February next.

J. B. WRIGHT, PRINTER.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 26. NEW SERIES. *Price* 4½*d.* FEBRUARY, 1, 1827

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(From Burder's Oriental Literature.)

NUMBERS xxi. 6. *Fiery Serpents.*

THIS species of serpents are provided with wings, by means of which, instead of creeping or leaping, it rises from the ground, and leaning upon the extremity of its tail, moves with great velocity. It is a native of Egypt, and the deserts of Arabia. The existence of winged serpents is attested by many modern writers. A kind of snakes were discovered among the Pyrenees, from whose sides proceeded cartilages, in the form of wings. *Scaliger* mentions a peasant who killed a serpent of the same species which attacked him, and presented it to the king of France. *Le Blanc* says, at the head of the lake Chiamay are extensive woods and marshes, which it is very dangerous to approach, because they are infested by large serpents, which, raised from the ground on wings resembling those of bats, and leaning on the extremity of their tails, move with great rapidity.

In America, during summer, fire flies appear every night. After a slight shower in an afternoon, the woods are seen sparkling with them in every direction. Their light is emitted from the tail, each having the power of emitting it or not, at pleasure. They are, undoubtedly, flying glow-worms, still emitting light from the tail-part. WELD'S *Trav. through North America*, vol. i. p. 198.

One night, says BERNIER (in the account of his *Voyage to*

the East Indies,) " when there was not a breath of wind, and the air was so hot and stifling that we could scarcely breathe in the creek, where we had retired out of the main channel, the bushes around us were so full of those little shining worms, that they seemed to be on fire; and there arose flies here and there, which were like flames, and frightened my seamen, who said they were devils. Among the rest there arose two, that were very extraordinary; one was a great globe of fire, which in falling and spinning, lasted above the time of saying a paternoster; and the other, which lasted about a quarter of an hour, was like a little tree all in a flame." PINKERTON'S *Coll.* part xxxii. p. 229.

A very venomous kind of serpents, whose imflammatory bite acquired them the name of fiery, and to which the Greeks gave a name that may indicate swelling as well as inflammation. (prester). Yet some assert, ou account of their Hebrew name, that they were winged serpents, of which HERODOTUS relates, (ii. 75. 76.) " that in spring they come from Arabia to Egypt, to be there eaten by the bird called Ibis, which was so highly honoured by the Egyptians, because it cleared the country of those dangerous animals." He adds, that he found whole heaps of the skeletons of those serpents. BOCHART says, " that they are short, spotted, and have wings like a bat." STOLLBERG'S *Hist. of the Religion of Jesus,* part ii. p. 162. The winged serpents as they are called, are rather lizards, with wings resembling those of the bat. See OEDMANN, No. vi. c. 7. p. 71. ROSENMULLER.

Num. xxi. 9. *A serpent of brass.*] It is remarkable that the Egyptians should worship, under the emblem of a serpent, the Divine Being, whom they called Ich-nuphi, that is the Good Spirit, (of which the Greeks made Knephis,) and whom they considered as the creator of the world, and the author of all beneficial and happy events. S. JABLONSKY'S *Panth. Ægypt.* p. i. chap. 4. It is not less remarkable that the same animal, by the sight of which the Israelites were made whole, (the serpent,) was an attribute of Esculapius, the god of physic. ROSENMULLER.

UNITARIANS AND DEISTS.

NO. II.

"Some of the Unitarians are now showing their intimate relationship with the Deists, by receiving them into their churches.—So we learn from the Monthly Repository, the organ of that body."

New Baptist Magazine, August, 1826.

[Our readers are requested to bear in mind that the following communication was sent for insertion in the Monthly Repository, in which the discussion originated, but the discussion closing with the former series of that work, the author has chosen the present channel.]

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR

On the very important, and, to me, very interesting subject, started by Mr. Noah Jones in the Monthly Repository, I wish to say a few words. There have been in the Repository several replies, I cannot call them answers to Mr. Jones' opinions, and I think his repliers are in the situation of Job's friends, they have found no answer, and yet like them also, they have condemned him.

Perhaps, in this day of increasing unbelief and unbelievers (for it is unfashionable to call them infidels, although I should like to see some good reason why things so much alike should not bear their proper names,) it may be necessary, that christianity should undergo the strictest possible scrutiny; that its evidences should pass another and a more fiery ordeal; men will come to the subject better prepared; will sift the matter more thoroughly. By this means the chaff will be separated from the wheat, and christianity will be distinguished from the corruptions with which it has been so long blended.

The more the evidences of christianity are examined, the brighter and purer will its truth appear to the mind. It will be like gold, which in passing the crucible loses nothing of itself, but appears more brilliant, and more beautiful. When the meretricious garments, in which statecraft and priestcraft have arrayed christianity be thrown off, then will she appear in all

the loveliness of her form, in all the amiableness and beauty of her features. Then, indeed, will men see that there is something in her nature to render her the object of esteem.

But, to return to the immediate subject of the present communication, which is to make a few remarks on a paper signed W. J. of Liverpool; who says, "The unwise proposal of Noah Jones to introduce tests, and subscriptions to articles of faith among Unitarian Societies, has met with that reception from the Unitarians themselves, which I confidently anticipated, from their known liberality." Indeed! But I can assure W. J. that notwithstanding the boasted liberality of the Unitarians, it is not quite so extensive as his latitudinarian system seems to require, nor has Mr. Jones's proposal been met by the Unitarians with that reception which is at all flattering to W. J.'s cause, whatever he might have confidently anticipated.

Before W. J. calls a proposal unwise, it might be as well for him to ascertain the general opinion. But has N. Jones proposed any tests, or subscriptions to articles of faith? Why do men deal thus unfairly by each other. If W. J. can prove that N. J. has done so; this proof is called for.

When W. J. mentions Unitarians, does he mean Unitarian Deists or Unitarian Christians? Is it his intention to identify them? Deists may be fond of this identification, but not so Unitarian Christians.

In bringing the subject of the union of deists and christians in church fellowship into view, I consider N. J. as having acted the part of a faithful and vigilant watchman, who having discovered some enemies within the city gates, has lifted up his warning voice, and I hope that warning will not be disregarded.

W. J. objects to Mr. Jones for regarding the christian revelation as the *only* source, from which satisfactory information, respecting God, and duty, and futurity can be obtained." I am of the same opinion with Mr. Jones. If satisfactory information could have been obtained, on these all important subjects, from the volume of nature, which was open for so many ages to the sages of the ancient world, surely W. J.'s beloved Socrates would have obtained it. He was as diligent a student, and as

keen a reader in that book, I suppose as W. J. or any other modern unbeliever. But what was the result of his inquiries? what the fruit of his studies? Did he obtain that information for which his soul panted? That for which he longed and sighed—the certainty of a future state? The knowledge that Socrates had on this subject was just sufficient to excite his desire for more, and to long for some revelation from heaven to satisfy him in this respect. The attainments of the wisest and the best of men, are sufficient to show the christian the value and importance of divine revelation, and lead him to bless God, that Jesus, the messenger of heaven to his brethren of mankind, hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.

In my next I shall pursue this subject, and glance at the Philosophy and Theology of the heathen world, and point out their inefficiency to enlighten the understanding and to satisfy the mind respecting the great doctrine of a future state of existence.

In the mean time, I remain,

Sir,

Yours respectfully,

JOHN RAGLAND.

Hindley, Jan. 1827.

THE ETERNITY OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR,

AT the conclusion of my former letter on this subject, (C. R. for 1826, p. 232,) I promised to show "that the doctrine of Eternal Misery derives no support from either Reason or Revelation," I shall now attempt to redeem my pledge.

Very few words will suffice to show that such a doctrine is abhorrent to all the deductions of reason from the volume of creation, which proclaims in every sunbeam, in every shower, in every breeze, that God is good—that he who gives us fruitful seasons, abundant harvests, blooming orchards, and boughs loaded with all the choice and useful productions, cannot, after all this display of his goodness—after all the abundant provision which he has made for the subsistence and gratification of his rational offspring during their lives, abandon them at death,

nay more, inflict upon them an infinitude of misery for the errors, or even the crimes of a very small portion of their existence.

It is impossible, in the eye of sober reason, to conceive that he who has implanted in the human breast those affections and dispositions, which lead man to promote his own happiness by promoting the good of his fellow man;—and leads him to forgive his erring and offending brother, when he repents and seeks forgiveness from him; can be himself the most inexorable and merciless being in the universe, and yet himself the fountain of benevolence and mercy!

The law of nature, the affections of the human heart, the sober, just reflections and deductions of reason, are all opposed to this tremendous doctrine, and all declare, that the assertion of it, is a libel on the character of him, who has not in any age left mankind without a witness of his fatherly care, and kindness, "in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness."

If then there be any foundation for this doctrine it must be sought for in the Scriptures, it must be a doctrine of Revelation, and I really think it is because professing christians, mistakingly, suppose this doctrine to be contained in the Scriptures that they believe it to be true.

Let us briefly inquire into the matter of fact. It is supposed that because the word everlasting is found in some passages of Scripture, in connection with the punishment of the future age, therefore, that punishment must necessarily be endless.

I shall reserve the direct examination of the word, which our translators have rendered eternal, and for ever and ever, &c. for my next letter: and now refer to the passages in which it occurs. Let not the reader be surprised when I say, that in the whole of the Scriptures when the word *everlasting* is supposed to be connected with future punishment, there are only seven passages, which the advocates for endless misery can bring forward in support of that doctrine.

Nothing relating to the punishment of the future age is to be found in the Institutions of Moses; they made no part either directly or indirectly of that dispensation.

The first passage we meet with is *Isaiah* xxxiii, 14, "who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?" Bp. Lowth acknowledges this does not refer to future punishment, but is the language of the wicked Jews, while under the infliction of the divine judgements on their country, by the hand of Senecharib, who burnt their towns and villages. The answer to this question will be found in the following verse which points out the security of the righteous; which see.

The next passage is *Daniel* xii, 2 the words are "everlasting contempt." This does not bear at all on the subject. There is then, no evidence, in favor of this doctrine to be found in the Old Testament.

We come now to the N. T. and we find the word does not occur once in the Gospels by Luke and John. Mark uses it once only and that in a peculiar sense, ch. iii, 29. It does not occur in the Acts of the Apostles; and but once in all the Epistles of Paul, and there it is "everlasting destruction," not everlasting punishment. It is not to be found in the Epistles of John, James or Peter. In the Book of the Revelation of John it can have no reference to the punishment of the future age; because that vision relates only to the state of the church in the present age, and where the term is used it is connected with the expression day and night, &c. and cannot refer to eternity, which is not measured by day and night.

It occurs then in the following passages only, Matt. xviii, 2. xxv, 41, 46, Mark, iii. 29. 2 Thess. 1, 9. and Jude 6. The last passage refers to the angels, or the messengers, who kept not their first estate, or principality, and the word everlasting extends only to the day of judgement.

That of Mark has a reference to a peculiar subject, and cannot I think, apply to the punishments of the future state. And Paul's expression cannot be tortured to mean an endless duration in misery.

There are, then, THREE passages only left for the advocates of this tremendous doctrine to rest upon, and it is the sound only of the word used in them and not the sense of it, on which they can stand. This I will endeavour to prove in my next,

I remain, yours,

THEOPHILUS.

PROTEST AGAINST THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

On the 14th and 15th January, 1827, at the Church of St George the Martyr, Queen Square London, another instance of protest *against*, and conformity *to*, the Marriage Ceremony, in the case of Unitarians, was exhibited to the public. The parties were members of the Church of Freethinking Christians. In consequence of their presenting a protest to the officiating minister he refused to marry them, but nothing daunted, they appeared again the following morning, when he consented to receive the protest, which he had before thought an insult, and they to go through the ceremony which they believed to be a violation of their consciences. On coming to the words, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," the bridegroom manifested some misgivings, and paused; but being compelled to use them, or remain unmarried, (hard alternative) he added ludicrously enough it must be admitted, "In the name of the Father, and *(but protesting against it)* of the Son, and *(but protesting against it)* of the Holy Ghost." And the Elder of the church, who of course was present on such an occasion, also protested. But protest or no protest, they must be gulped down; and conscience must choke, or burst itself in stretching. And what cares a minister of the Established Church a straw about it! Let those look to it, who have

no more prudence, and no better use for their money, than be at the enormous expence of "keeping a conscience." They should be "wiser in their generation," or content to reap the consequences of their folly.

When the parties were declared "man and wife, they would willingly have left the altar; (who, under such circumstances, would not?) but they were compelled to remain, aye, and to *kneel* too during the concluding prayer, "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, &c. &c." Well done, "excellent Mother Church!" Where shall we find a more tolerant, a more liberal, or a more charitable church on the face of the globe? Thou shalt have thy praise resounded from shore, to shore, from generation to generation; and woe be to the luckless wight, who shall say that thou art the daughter of "the Man of Sin;" who "as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God!" Let every one have his due, and Shylock his pound of flesh."

The elder, attending to what had taken place the day before, said, "we have been compelled to act as we have done, *in order to guard our consciences from violation.*"

Some will think, Mr. Editor, and I for one, that if this was their object, they pursued a strange course to accomplish it. Surely it is high time that so ridiculous and so immoral a principle, as that of protest and conformity, be exploded from every mind, that is not stupified by idiocy or hardened by crime. Why, in the name of common sense, what is it? Affirmation and negation, yes and no, right and wrong, in the same breath. Let the free thinking christians, to whom alone the honour or the disgrace of originating it belongs, try its application to other cases of conscience. Let them see, how it would bear them out in drunkenness, in libertinism, in adultery, in robbery, and in murder.

Would protesting against these vices and crimes, at the same time that they were committing them, clear their consciences of every stain of guilt? Yes, if it would do so in the other case, but not else. They would only have to say, in the language of their Elder, that "*they had been compelled to act as they had done, in order to guard their consciences from violation.*" The hiccuping, reeling drunkard might protest against drunkenness, and he would be a sober man; the libertine against the heartless practices of libertinism, and he would be chaste; the adulterer against infidelity to the marriage vow, and he would keep it sacred; the robber against lawless depredations, and he would be honest and just; and the murderer against imbruing his hands in his brother's blood, and not a stain would attach to them, and his soul would be pure. A little protesting would make their sins, though like "scarlet, as white as snow!" O, how convenient an expedient! How smoothly might we pass through the world, were we to regulate our conduct by this sublime moral maxim! Ye noble-minded martyrs, who fearlessly shed your blood rather than sacrifice your integrity, how happy would you have been, had the free thinking christians of the nineteenth century, lived in your day! Had these enlightened moralists been at your elbow, your blood would still have flowed in your veins, and you would have been preserved at the remotest distance from suffering for conscience' sake. We live in happier days; for we have only to *protest*, and, though we universally *conform*, we are as white as driven snow.

A word or two before I conclude, in a graver strain.—It is admitted on all hands, that the Marriage Ceremony is a violation of the consciences of Unitarians. On this principle are our petitions to parliament founded and on this account do we pray for relief. What, then, is the line of conduct which Unitarians ought to adopt? Are they to be self-condemned, and continue to violate their consciences, till the legislature shall please to grant their prayer. Or is it incumbent upon them, as their first duty, to prserve their consciences pure, at all events? And if so, how are their marriages to be solemnized, and this, at the same time, strictly observed?

A UNITARIAN CONVERT.

UNITARIANISM.

One Hundred Scriptural Arguments in favour of Unitarianism.

(A pamphlet, lately published at Boston, America.)

(CONCLUDED FROM OUR LAST, P. 17.)

XLII. Because, in presence of a numerous company before the resurrection of Lazarus, *he gave thanks to the Father for having heard him.* "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I knew that thou hearest me always," John xi, 1, 24.

XLIII. Because Jesus *besought his Father to glorify him.* "And now, O Father, *glorify thou me* with thyself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John xvii, 5. The being who prayed to God to glorify him, *cannot* be God.

XLIV. Because he *implored* that, if it were possible, the bitter cup might pass from him, adding, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt," Matth. xxvi, 39.

XLV. Because he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matth. xxvii, 46. *Can* he who uttered this be the sneme God?

XLVI. Because he never paid his adorations to *himself, the Son,* nor to the *Holy Ghost,* as he should have done, had the Son and the Holy Ghost been *God;* but *always to the Father.*

XLVII. Because he never instructed his disciples to worship *himself* or the *Holy Ghost,* but the *Father,* and the Father *only.* "When ye pray, say, our *Father* which art in heaven," Luke xi, 2. "In that day, *ye shall ask me nothing.* Whatsoever ye ask of the *Father* in my name," &c. John xvi, 23. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the *true worshippers shall worship the father* in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh *such* to worship *him,*" John iv, 23.

XLVIII. Because it was not the practice of the apostles to pay religious homage to Christ, but to *God* the Father *through* Christ. "I thank God *through* Jesus Christ," Rom. vii, 25. "To God *only* wise, be glory *through* Christ," Rom. xvi, 27.

I bow my knees unto the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ," Eph. iii, 14.

XLIX. Because St. Peter, immediately after being filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, thus addressed the Jews; "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man *approved of God* among you, by miracles, and wonders and signs, which *God did by him* in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; *whom God hath raised up*," &c, Acts ii, 22—24.

L. Because St. Paul expressly states, that "*all things are of God*, who hath reconciled us to himself *by* Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. v, 18.

LI. Because the same apostle gives "thanks *to God*, who giveth us the victory *through* our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv, 57.

LII. Because it is said, that it is "*to the glory of God the Father*," that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," Phil. ii, 11.

LIII. Because the Scriptures affirm, that "Christ *glorified not himself* to be made a high priest, but HE [glorified him] who said unto him, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Heb. v, 5.

LIV. Because it is expressly asserted, that *God gave to Christ* the Revelation which was made to the author of the Apocalypse, Rev. i, 1,

LV. Because an apostle speaks of Christ, *only as the image* of God. "Who is the image of the invisible God," Col. i, 15. 2 Cor. iv, 4. It would be absurd to call any one *his own image.*

LVI. Because Christ is stated to be "the *first born* of every *creature*," Col. i. 15.

LVII Because he is said to be "the beginning of the creation of God," Rev. iii. 14.

LVIII. Because the Scriptures affirm, in so many words, that "Jesus was made a little *lower* than the angels," Heb. ii. 9 Can God become lower than his creatures?

LIX. Because Peter declares that, "*Christ received from God the Father honour and glory*, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, this is my beloved Son," &c 2 Peter i, 17.

LX. Because it is represented as necessary that the Saviour of mankind should "*be made like unto his brethren*," Heb. ii. 17.

LXI. Because, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Christ is *compared with Moses* in a manner that would be impious, if he were the Supreme God. "For this man [Christ] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses inasmuch," &c. Heb. iii. 3.

LXII. Because he is represented as being the *servant*, the *chosen*, the *beloved* of God, and the *recipient of God's Spirit*. "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him," &c. Matt. xii. 18.

LXIII. Because he himself expressly declares that, it was in consequence of *his doing what pleased the Father*, that the Father was *with him, and did not leave him alone*. "He that *sent* me is *with me;* the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him," John viii. 29.

LXIV. Because he is said to have "*increased* in wisdom, and in favour with *God* and man," Luke ii. 52.

LXV. Because he speaks of himself as one who had *received commands* from the Father. "The Father, who sent me, he *gave me* a commandment," John xii. 49.

LXVI. Because he is represented as *obeying* the Father, and as having been "obedient unto death," Phil, ii. 8. Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak, John xii. 50. "I have kept my Father's commandments," John xv. 10.

LXVII. Because Christ "*learned obedience* by the things which he *suffered*," and *through sufferings was made perfect by God*, Heb. v, 8, ii. 10.

LXVIII. Because he is spoken of in the Scriptures as the *first born among many brethren*, Rom. viii. 29. Has God *brethren?*

LXIX. Because Christ calls every one, who obeys God, his *brother*. "Whosoever shall do the will of *my Father* in heaven the same is *my brother*, Matt. xii. 50.

LXX. Because he offers to the faithful the like distinction and honour that himself has with the Father. "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne,' Rev. iii. 21.

LXXI. Because *God*, in the latter ages, hath spoken *by his Son*, and *appointed him* heir of all things, Heb. i. 2.

LXXII. Because Christ is styled *the first begotten of the dead*, Rev. i. 5.

LXXIII. Because it is declared that *God raised him from the dead.* "This Jesus hath GOD raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." Acts ii. 32.

LXXIV. Because GOD poured out upon the Apostles the Holy Spirit, *through Jesus Christ*, Tit. iii. 6.

LXXV. Because the reason, assigned for the Holy Spirit not having been received earlier, is, that *Jesus was not then glorified.* "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified," John vii. 39.

LXXVI. Because it is affirmed that Christ was *exalted by God* to be a Prince and a Saviour, Acts v. 31.

LXXVII. Because GOD *made* that same Jesus, who wa crucified, both Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 36.

LXXVIII. Because GOD *gave him* a name which is above every name, Phil, ii. 9.

LXXIX Because Christ was *ordained of* God to be the judge of quick and dead, Acts x. 42.

LXXX. Because God will judge the secrets of men *by* Jesus Christ, Rom. iii. 16.

LXXXI. Because all judgment *is committed* to Christ *by the father*, John v. 22.

LXXXII Because our Saviour grounds the importance of his judgment solely upon the circumstance, that it is *not* exclusively *his own* judgment, which he pronounces, but that of the Father who sent him. "If I judge, my judgment is true; *for I am not alone*, but *I and the Father* that sent me." John viii, 16.

LXXXIII. Because it is said, that when he was received up into heaven, he "*sat on the right hand of God*," Mark xvi, 19.

LXXXIV. Because St. Paul affirms, that Christ, even since his ascension, "liveth *unto* God," and "liveth *by* the power of God," Rom. vi, 10. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

LXXXV. Because it is affirmed of Christ, that "when all things shall be subdued under him, then shall the *Son also himself be subject* unto him that put all things under him, that *God may be all in all*," 1 Cor. xv, 28.

LXXXVI. Because the Apostle John asserts that "*no man hath seen God* at any time;" which is not true, if Christ were God.

LXXXVII. Because, in the *prophecies* of the O. T. that relate to Christ, he is spoken of as a being distinct from and inferior to God, Deut. xviii, 15. John i, 45.

LXXXVIII. Because the Jews never expected, that any other than a being distinct from and inferior to God, was to be their Messiah, and yet there is no evidence that our Saviour ever so much as hinted to them that this expectation was erroneous.

LXXXIX. Because it does not appear from the Scriptures, that the Jews, except in two instances, ever opposed our Saviour on the ground that he pretended to *be God* or *equal with God*, whereas, had it been his custom to assume such identity or equality, in his conversation with a people so strongly attached o the doctrine of the *divine unity*, he would have found himself involved in a perpetual controversy with them on this point, some traces of which must have appeared in the N. T.

XC. Because *in these two instances*, when charged, in the one case, with making himself God, and in the other, with making himself equal with God, he *positively denies the charges*. In reply to the charge of assuming to be *equal with God*, he says immediately, "The Son can do *nothing* of himself, but what he seeth the Father do;" and directly after, "I can of my mine own self do nothing." John v. 19, 30. In answer to the charge of *making himself God*, he appeals to the Jews, in substance, thus; Your own Scriptures call Moses a god and your magistrates gods; I am surely not inferior to them, yet I do not call myself *God*, but only *Son* of God, John x, 34, 35, 36.

XCI. Because, had his immediate disciples believed him to be the Almighty, would they have been so *familiar* with him, have *argued* with him, *betrayed* him, *denied* him, *fled from* him, and *left him to be dragged to the cross?*

XCII. Because the apostles, after they had been filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost, did not preach that Christ was God; but preached what was altogether inconsistent with such a doctrine; Acts ii, 22; xiii, 23 xvii, 3, 31; xxii, 8.

XCIII. Because there is no evidence to prove, that the first converts to Christianity ever incurred the imputation of *idolatry* from the Jews, as they must have done, had they believed and taught that the *Son*, as well as the *Father*, is Jehovah; while it is notorious that this imputation has been among the most common of the Jewish reproaches against Christians, since the Trinity became a doctrine of the church.

XCIV. Because there are, in the N. T. *seventeen* passages, wherein the *father* is styled *one* or *only God*, while there is not a single passage in which the *Son* is so styled.

XCV. Because there are 320 passages, in which the *Father* is absolutely, and by way of *eminence* called God; while there is *not one* in which the *Son* is thus called.

XCVI. Because there are 105 passages, in which the *Father* is denominated God, with *peculiarly high titles and epithets*, whereas the *Son* is not once so denominated.

XCVII. Because there are 90 passages, wherein it is declared that *all prayers* and *praises* ought to be offered to HIM and that every thing ought to be ultimately directed to HIS *honour and glory*; while of the *Son* no such declaration is ever made.

XCVIII. Because of 1300 passsges in the N. T. wherein the word *God* is mentioned, not one necessarily implies the existence of more than *one person* in the Godhead, or that this one is any other than the *Father.*

XCIX. Because the passages, wherein the *Son* is declared *positively*, or by the clearest implication, to be *subordinate to the Father, deriving his being from Him, receiving from Him his divine power, and acting in all things wholly according to His will*, are in number above 300.

C. Because in a word, the supremacy of the Father, and the inferiority of the Son, is the *simple unembarrassed*, and *current* doctrine of the Bible; whereas, that of their *equality* or *dentity* is clothed in mystery, encumbered with difficulties, and dependent, at the best, upon few passages for support.

THE PLAIN SPEAKER,

NO. I.

Plain thoughts on the Church of England.

A FRAGMENT.

"He cannot flatter—he
An honest man and plain—he must speak truth
And they will take it so—if not, he's plain."

My opinion is, that the established Church of this country, is a very *bad* one. It was *bad* in its *origin*. It is *bad* in its *nature*: bad in its doctrines, and bad in its influence.

1. Its *origin* was bad. It calls itself, an *Apostolic* Church, by which is meant that it is formed on the model of churches in the age of the apostles, and that the authority of its officers is derived, in some way or other, from the first inspired teachers of christianity. A real gratification would be afforded to the curious, if some ingenious person would explain in a clear and intelligible manner, the points of resemblance between this and the apostolic model. They would probably find it an easier task to describe the points of difference than those of agreement. The true church is indeed built upon the foundation of apostles. The church of England could make no such pretensions, unless her brow had borrowed a little brass from that other ecclesiastical lady at Rome. Apostolic church! I marvel whether the apostles would know their own handy work! They would probably be at a loss to discover any of their "gold and silver and precious stones," amongst the wood and stubble and hay of this strange piece of architecture. The church of Christ is built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; the church of England is built upon the foundation of royal prerogative and acts of parliament, King Henry VIII being the chief corner stone.

In the apostolic church were apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, teachers; in the other are archbishops, bishops, deans, canons, prebendaries, rectors, vicars, curates. The apostolic

churches say, "if thy brother offend against thee, expostulate with him, or bring him before the church; the church of England says, bring him into the spiritual court; and in this court, she has chancellors, archdeacons, commissioners, vicars-general, officials, surrogates, proctors, registrars, apparitors aad a list too tedious to enumerate.

"My kingdom is not of this world," says the one—"church and state," cries the other—"No Bishop, no King." The *one* tells us that the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy —the *other* gives us practical proof that her dominion is filled with contention, ambition, and avarice. There the grand question is "who shall be greatest." The apostle could have said, "though the laborer is worthy of his hire, and they who preach the gospel *may* live by it—yet I labour with mine own hands;" an English Bishop can say, "I have an enormous revenue, extensive Parks, a princely palace;—I live upon the fat of the land and the people do me homage." In the apostolic church there is one master, Christ; in the other there are as many masters as ranks, lording it, in regular gradations over the heads of one another. But there would be no end to the points of contrast, suffice it to say, that the King of these realms lords it over all the other members, in direct defiance of the apostle's assertion that Christ is "head over all things to the church."

The foundation of the Church of England apostolic! why the very first act that gave the church of this country, a separate existence, was the tyrant Henry's declaring himself the supreme head of the church: and, this he did, as every body out of the church knows, whatever her own children may think, because the court of Rome made a difficulty of granting him a divorce from his wife, in order that he might marry the unfortunate Ann Boleyn. Queen Mary gave up the claims of her father; but Elizabeth, who was the daughter of Ann Boleyn, could not do so, without thereby acknowledging herself illegitimate, so she, like a good politician effected an act in Parliament, attaching to the crown all that her father had arrogated to himself. So you see, here we have the Church of England; here you see its beginning; how it rose; who created it and by what means it was produced: we have ascertained its origin. Was it not bad?

Let us now look at its *nature*. It is a State-religion. Its origin as we have seen was political, and its interests are so. If it chance to do any moral good, that is purely an accidental circumstance, not arising from its own nature. Its institutions, creeds, formularies, are all decided by authority which was not conferred for religious purposes at all, by a political power. It is the prerogative of the crown to add, take away, derange, make and unmake, as it pleases in this church. The King confers the highest honors in the church, and by these means, a

vast variety of worldly interests are embodied in it. This union of church and state we are told is to protect religion. A true system of religion wants no protection from civil power. The established system certainly does require it, for unless thus protected it would fall to the ground from its own intrinsic rottenness. The religion of Christ can do without it; nay, that religion is essentially defiled by being touched by the hand of power. The very moment you establish any authority in matters of faith; set up an earthly tribunal; make conformity to articles and religious observances necessary to the enjoyment of civil rights (all which things are in the very nature of the present establishments) you undermine one of the fundamental principles of the true religion; and if you ordain a succession of honors and emoluments conferable, as in this case, by persons more interested in temporal than spiritual advantages, you fan the flame of political, rather than of religious zeal, and open a door to ambition and all those passions that can draw off the attention from the well being of the whole, to the interest of the individual.

As an establishment, the church of England must of course have certain definite points of belief to which the faith of her members must be pinned down. Such she has. What some of them are we shall see presently. But think of the very circumstance in *itself*. A scheme for perpetuating the errors, of past ages to all eternity; a scheme which offers a premium to ignorance to credulity and hypocrisy: a plan for preventing improvement and checking mental exertion, a system of deliberate despotism attempted to be established over men's very thoughts and inmost souls; a system which rewards the unprincipled and punishes the conscientious! We will venture to come a little nearer to these points.

There are the thirty-nine articles; when were they made? two hundred years ago. What was their origin? for preventing of differences. Who draw them up? a number of priests, many of whom could hardly write their own names, ignorant, stupid, bigoted. From that time to this, it has been incumbent on all the members of this church apostolic to continue in the uniform profession thereof. It is required "that all further curious search be laid aside and that there be no vagging or departing in the least degree." Thus the poor ignorant priests who lived two centuries back are to dictate to us, and to our posterity for ever. We may surpass them in general knowledge; make what discoveries we can in science; avail ourselves of every improvement in the arts of life; in all these respects, the talents, efforts and the experience of the last two hundred years may be made use of; but, in religion, our church-bound christians must *be* as ignorant, or *profess* to be as ignorant as their forefathers were in the year 1571. Is not this church *fundamentally bad* in its *nature?*

In my next I shall glance at the Doctrines of the Church of England, as they are laid down in the three Creeds, the Catechism, and the Articles.

PLAIN SPEAKER.

EXTARCTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

(From Mr. Whitaker's Sermon on the Unity and Supremacy of God the Father.)

It is affirmed that the doctrine of the Trinity, though revealed, is mysterious, and Unitarians, in rejecting it, are charged with an attempt to exalt reason above revelation.

This charge is made against Unitarians in a pointed and especial manner, but we believe, on a strict examination of its bearing, it will be found to effect, more seriously than is often imagined, the character of revelation in general—that it lessens, inconceivably, its intrinsic value, counteracts, in a great measure its otherwise beneficent effects, fosters a captious, satirical, sceptical spirit in society, and has prevented, and does still continue to prevent, to an alarming degree, the extension and propagation of Christianity in the world. No one cause, we are persuaded—and we say it, not in a spirit of recrimination, but of unaffected sorrow and painful regret—no one cause, we are well persuaded, has ever contributed more towards producing infidelity with respect to the Christian religion, than the efforts that have been made by priests and learned men, in every age, to represent its doctrines as awfully mysterious and incomprehensible by human reason. Many persons have imagined, that it would be a reflection on the character of an infinitely wise being to adapt the discoveries of his infinite mind to the weak capacities of finite creatures, or to make revelations of himself, of his providence and his purposes, that were capable of being completely fathomed and understood. In their view, whenever God speaks, his words convey some secret and hidden meaning, some dark and mysterious design, or providence. Truth is always shrouded in obscurity, and veiled in shadows, and all its problems are to be solved by faith and conjecture, not by rea-

soning and argument. Spiritual conceptions are always vague confused, and indeterminate, and religion itself is a matter quite incomprehensible by all but "the elect." They endeavour, therefore, to find in the Scriptures strange and wonderful doctrines, far above human comprehension, and perplex the mind with various sublime and inexplicable mysteries which they suppose revelation inculcates. Mystery, in their apprehension, constitutes the glory and excellence of the gospel, and clear and plain truths, that involve no difficulty, are, at once, rejected, as the base offspring of human reason. In the creeds of most churches, not an article can be named that does not partake more, or less, of the mysterious character. Most of the solemn councils that we read of in history were convoked, from time to time, for no other purpose than to settle disputes that had arisen respecting the "mysteries" of religion.—The members of the "church militant" are supposed to be well grounded in these incomprehensible doctrines, and all who deny them have been denounced as heretics, and excluded from Christian fellowship and communion. None, indeed, are considered to be in a state fit for salvation and future happiness, who cannot detail to the satisfaction of the initiated the history of some mysterious operation of which they have been the subjects, and whose faith does not partake largely of the hidden, the intricate and the marvellous.—Thus Christianity, for what reasons we shall not pretend to say, has been represented as a most wonderful, extravagant and inexplicable system, and as one calculated to amaze and terrify, and, perhaps, to subdue the minds of its converts, but not to enlighten, or convince them. And with such claims, if we believe the assertions of a large portion of its advocates, it comes forth, challenging for itself the faith and acquiescence of the world.

In answer to the objection, which is made to our views, founded on the mysterious character of revelation, we reply therefore,

1. That the value of divine revelation is not enhanced, but diminished, by the obscure and mysterious character attributed to it. Those truths are, certainly, the most useful, which are

delivered in the most luminous and intelligible manner. However sublime and overwhelming any alleged mysteries may be in themselves, and however implicit an acquiescence in them may be required of those to whom they are addressed, it will be difficult to point out any advantages that can possibly result from the belief of them. As they are acknowledged to be perfectly unintelligible, and inexplicable, they can be no acquisition to the province of knowledge. A man may study them all his life and never be the wiser for his diligence. As they serve only to perplex, weary, and embarrass the mind, they can with little reason be said to increase the sum, or extend the sphere of human happiness. Upon the whole, therefore, they render divine revelation less valuable, and contribute less to its reputation than do those important, practical truths, which we believe it always inculcates in a clear and perspicuous manner.

2. Taking it for granted that the Supreme Being possesses the attributes which are usually ascribed to him, we say it is not *probable* that a revelation from such a being would contain any mysteries. It certainly must be considered a reflection both upon the wisdom and the power of almighty God to suppose that he has revealed truths for the benefit of mankind, and yet has shrouded them in so much obscurity, that they cannot, with all their efforts, understand them. This would not seem to be the part of a good or a wise Sovereign, for if our understandings were found insufficient to unravel very difficult things, it would be the object of such a being to remove all obstacles in the path of truth by making his discoveries plainer and more evident, and not to perplex the mind by involving them more and more in the dark.

3. Supposing revelation actually means what the term indicates, viz. the discovery of truths which were before either partially or entirely unknown, it is *impossible*, strictly speaking, that divine revelation should contain any mysteries. As soon as a proposition is revealed, it ceases to be a mystery. The spirit of God has solved the problem. Human wit and human zeal may disguise its beauty in a thousand ways, and decorate it with foreign ornaments, and obscure its lustre by false shades,

but, for all their impotent efforts, they will only gain the credit of a presumptuous act, in attempting to make that appear dark and mysterious which God has made clear.

THE GLEANER.

"WE CULL THE CHOICEST."

BIGOTRY CURED.

Often when argument is useless on some minds, ridicule produces the desired effect, as may be seen from the following.

When Dr. Thomas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, was chaplain to the British factory at Hamburg, a gentleman belonging to the factory died at a village about ten miles distant. Application was made to the clergyman of the parish, for leave to bury him in the church yard. The parson inquired of what religion he was; and was told that he died a Calvinist. "Then," said he, "he cannot be buried here, there are none but Lutherans in my church yard, and there shall be no other." On this being told to Dr. Thomas, he immediately took his horse and went to argue the matter with the parson, but found him inflexible. At length the doctor gained by ridicule what he had failed to accomplish by force of reason. "You remind me," says the doctor, to the intolerant priest, "of a circumstance which once happened to myself, when I was curate of a church in Thames street; I was burying a corpse, when a woman came and pulled me by the sleeve in the middle of the service." Sir, sir, I want to speak to you. "Pr'ythee," says I, "wait till I have done!" "No sir, I must speak to you immediately!" "Why then, what is the matter?" "Why sir," said she, "you are burying a man who died of the small pox next my poor husband, who never had it." This story had the desired effect; and the curate permitted the bones of the poor Calvinist to be laid in a Lutheran church-yard.

Baptizing in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

MR. EDITOR,

WE read in the xxviii. chap. of Matthew's Gospel, that Jesus, after his resurrection, commissioned his disciples to go and preach the gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Now it does not appear, from the New Testament, that the apostles ever once used this form of baptism, but always baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus only. How is this to be accounted for? Is the passage genuine; or did the apostles disobey the command of their Lord?—I ask for informatiou on this subject, and am, your constant reader, TYRO.

MISAPPLICATION OF PROPHECY.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

I find it is very common for writers, to apply the prophecy in Isaiah vii. 14, to the mother of Jesus of Nazareth. And another passage in the same writer, in the ix chap. 6 verse is applied to Jesus, and from it an attempt is made to prove the Deity of the man of Nazareth. Again the liii chapter of the same book is supposed to refer to the sufferings of Jesus, and those who believe in the doctrine of a satisfaction made to God for the sins of the Elect, by his death think that doctrine is fully established by the expressions of the prophet.

I shall be obliged to any of your correspondents who can clearly prove, if any of the above passages do at all, or in any respect, refer to Jesus of Nazareth.

I am, Sir, your's,

INQUIRO.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Removal of Ministers.

THE Rev. R. Wright of Trowbridge, has engaged to remove to Kirkstead in Lincolnshire, and to commence his labours, as Minister of that place, at Michaelmas next.

THE Rev. John Philp, of Whitchurch, has accepted the invitation to become the Minister of the Unitarian congregation at Ipswich, to which place he will remove immediately.

THE Rev. Henry Green, entered on his situation as Minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Knutsford, the beginning of last month.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

ON GOD.

WHO with herculean toil has rais'd on high
Yon pond'rous arch, and holds it in the sky?
Who form'd yon million worlds that scatter light
Thro' the vast empire of primeval night?
Do brazen pillars prop th' incumbent dome,
Or with the load some great Atlantes groan?
Did countless hosts of angels toil to raise
Its massive columns, and infix its base,
Toil till it tower'd from depth's profound unknown,
Near to their golden seats and blissful zone;
Toil till it circled in its mighty round
A wilderness immense, that scorns a bound?
No: heaven's high King beheld, from realms of bliss,
Spread 'neath his dazzling throne the waste abyss,
Immur'd in gloom and everlasting night,
And void of aught to shew his potent might.
Swift on the reined whirlwinds, from the skies,
Wrapp'd in thick piles of sable clouds, he flies,
From his dark car big thunders burst around,
And vivid lightnings blaze the vast profound,
While on heaven's walls th' astonish'd angels stand
To view the wonders of th' Almighty's hand.
Now from the midst of chaos rose on high
The awful voice of Him who rules the sky,
Like the loud roar of oceans, when they rise
In mix'd confusion, thund'ring to the skies;
Heaven's host angelic trembling heard the sound,
Her brazen walls the direful voice rebound.
Then swift as clouds, that veil the face of heav'n,
Before the winged hurricane are driv'n,
Th' enormous dome unfurls, and rolling bends
O'er the wide waste, and round all space extends.
'Gain did the sovereign of the skies exalt
His dreadful voice, which echo'd to the vault,
Worlds roll on worlds, and round the throne of night
Innum'rous suns dash down their radiant light,
Sidereal orbs in vast profusion roam,
And pour effulgence thro' the ebon dome.
Hark! sudden bursting from a million tongues,
The syren-sound of angels, chanting songs
To their returning God. See how they gaze,
With ravish'd soul on you resplendant blaze,
Yon vault of worlds, whose splendour charms the sight,
And gems the space once drown'd in gloom and night.

Liverpool. T. G.

THE CEMETERY.

There is a spot, a little spot,
Which giddy youth wou'd wish to shun;
But it can never be forgot,
The thread of life's so finely spun.

Why is it men are so afraid,
Whene'er this spot appear in view;
It is because a train is laid
For thoughts of what they must come to.

And yet it is a place of rest
From worldly trouble and from care.
Each traveller is a welcome guest,
He always ends his journey there.

Death owns this safe, this last retreat,
Alike of cowards and the brave;
And ne'er but once sustain'd defeat,
Intrench'd within this spot, the grave.

M.

Delamere.

SOLITUDE.

How pleasant 'tis to wander thro' the grove,
When gentle zephyrs on their bosoms bear
The sweetest fragrance of the woodbine's flower
When lowly trees their branches entertwine,
As wholly to exclude the mid-day sun,
Save when he darts a feeble ray between
And gives it all th' appearance of fairy-ground.
Yet even then is Nature's carpet spread
And studded o'er with flowr's of various hues
Congenial to the soil, where art itself
Has ne'er presum'd to show its mimic skill.
If but th' mind, by anxious care oppress'd
Shou'd wish to indulge in solitude an hour,
And to retain the scenes of former times;
This is the place, for melancholy hangs
Upon each bough, and little noise is heard
Than the low murmur of some distant rill.
Is there a spot, more likely than the rest,
To raise our groveling thoughts to things above,
When contemplation, with her sober train,
Can lead from "Nature up to Nature's God,"
'T is here, for bigotry ne'er haunts
The sacred place where piety loves to dwell
There is a something in this solitude
That captivates the minds of all who seek
To hide their follies, and refine the heart;
To give full scope to ev'ry virtuous thought,
And to renew our own intercourse with heav'n.

M.

Delamere.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Y. is received, and under consideration.

We request the attention of our readers to the Hundred Scriptural Arguments in favour of Unitarianism, which we have copied into this and the preceding number, being the whole of a Pamphlet published at Boston, U. S. under that title. We have published it separately, it may be had in quantities very cheap to those who buy them for gratuitous distribution.

Erratum, p. 33, line 16, for *sueme*, read *supreme*.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 27. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* MARCH, 1, 1827

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

JEPHTHA SACRIFICING HIS DAUGHTER.

Various opinions have been entertained on this subject by commentators, we copy the following from an "Essay on a New Translation of the Bible;" published in 1727. *The opinion of Mr. Bellamy coincides with that of the author we have quoted.*

There is none that can read Jephtha's vow and the execution of it, as most translators express and represent it, without horror and amazement. To find a man, and that not a wild *barbarian*, but an *Israelite*, offering in a burnt offering, a young and innocent, and, no doubt, beautiful and virtuous maid; to find a fond and indulgent father burning the fruit of his own body; his only Child, nay, and his dutiful and obedient child too; the object of his present comforts and future hopes; to find him whom the apostle lists, in the catalogue of the most pious and faithful worthies of the Old Testament vowing to offer a human sacrifice to God, at the very time wherein the scripture says, the spirit of the Lord was upon him, and putting his vow afterwards in execution, though human sacrifices were hateful and abominable to the Lord, and provoked him utterly to destroy the *Canaanites*, and kindled his indignation against the *Israelites*, when they brought the king of *Moab* to the sad necessity of "offering his eldest son for a burnt offering on the wall of his own city;" I say, to find all this is very puzzling and unaccountable. But

it is very strange that translators should have rendered several passages of this vow, in favour of such a cruel and barbarous sense; especially ours, who knew that the words could very well admit of a very different and reasonable meaning, as may be seen by the notes they have set down, on the margin of the 31 and 40 verses of that Chapter. It cannot be denied, but that the word which is rendered *and*, signifies *or*, in a great many places of Scripture. A certain Doctor says, that it cannot be so taken here, but until he gives his reason, I humbly beg leave to differ from him. I believe he thinks with Mr. Pool, whom he seems to have consulted on the words, that the propriety of speech will not admit of translating *or* for *and* in this place. But neither Pool nor the Dr. had thought so, if they had considered that the words, *shall be the Lord's*, should be more properly rendered, *shall be consecrated to the Lord*, i. e. dedicated and set apart for God's special service as *Nazarenes* were. And that it is in such a sense as this, that Jephtha is said to have done according to his vow, is clear, because it is immediately subjoined and she knew no man; for if she was sacrificed just as she came down from the Mount, this expression is altogether superfluous, because it is plain enough from her bewailing of her virginity for three months, that she had known no man before; and it was very certain, that she could know no man after. So that it is very natural to understand the words thus, that Jephtha according to his vow had set apart his daughter for God's special service, and that she continued unmarried, that she might be more careful of the things which belong unto the Lord; which will more fully appear, if we consider that the word which is rendered to lament in the following verse, signifies also to talk with.

But it is said, that if this had been all that Jephtha vowed, he had not been so much troubled as he was, when at his return his Daughter met him; for it is said. He rent his cloaths, and said, alas my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me. But they that think so, seem to be strangers to the Old Testament notions, and to human nature. It appears from several places of the Old Testament that the being without Children, and consequently perpetual virginity

was looked upon as a curse and reproach, and how desirous men are to see their posterity increase, is very evident. So that it is no way strange to find Jephtha troubled and rending his clothes, when his only child was to live and die under this reproach, when he saw his family almost extinct, and himself excluded from all hopes of posterity, and particularly from the hopes of having the Messiah to come of his seed.

From what hath been said, I think it is very reasonable to conclude, that Jephtha did not sacrifice his daughter, and that part of that chapter is thus to be translated :

" *Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephtha, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mispeh of Gilead, and from Mispeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon; and Jephtha vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, if thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, then it shall be that whatsoever cometh out of the door of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, that I will consecrate it to the Lord, or I will offer it up for a burnt offering—So Jephtha passed over unto the children Ammon, to fight against them, and the Lord delivered them into his hand. And Jephtha came to Mispeh to his house, and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances, and she was his only child: Beside her he had neither son nor daughter.—And it came to pass when he saw her, that he rent his cloaths, and said, Alas my daughter thou hast brought me very low, thou art one of those that trouble me; For I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.—And it came to pass at the end of two months that she returned to her Father, who did unto her according to his vow, and she continued unmarried. And it was a custom in Israel, that the Daughters of Israel went yearly to talk with the Daughter of Jephtha the Gileadite, four days in a year.*

THE PLAIN SPEAKER,

NO. II.

Plain thoughts on the Church of England.

A FRAGMENT.

"He cannot flatter—he
An honest man and plain—he must speak truth
And they will take it so—if not, he's plain."

IN my last I endeavored to show, that the apostolical church of England is bad in its nature, and bad in its foundation.

I now proceed to glance at the doctrines of this church. These we shall find laid down, in the three Creeds, the Catechism and the Articles. As to the Apostles' Creed, it need only be remarked, that if it really was the apostles' Creed, it ought to have been enough for an *apostolic* Church. It is very odd indeed that an *apostolic* Church should want two Creeds more than the apostles themselves. However, two more we have, in the Book of Common Prayer; one called the Nicene from its having been drawn up at the Meeting of Bishops, at Nice in the year 325: the other called the Athanasian, from its having been attributed to Athanasius, who was Bishop of Alexandria in Egypt, at the same time. The members of the church of England are required to believe both these creeds, though the one in some points differs from the other. If I were in that Church and found out any contradictions I would choose to be on the safe side and stick to the Athanasian. The *Nicene* does not threaten the unbeliever with perdition, the other does. I offer this hint for the benefit of any persons who may be laboring under difficulties.

We will now have a look at the *Athanasian* Creed, which boasts itself to contain the "Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." In this creed the most awful secrets of the Divine existence are treated with no more deference than the lightest trifles; and the most unintelligible jargon is employed to describe "him whom none can find out unto perfection." If our ears had not been familiarized to such outrageous

language as that which is used in this creed; we could not listen to it without shuddering. I give only a small specimen. "The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal." "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God: and yet they are not three God's but one God. The Father is made of none: not created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father: not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding." I don't know what my readers may think of all this; I can not tell how they may feel on reading it, or what conclusions their reflections lead to, but my own opinion is, that all such absurd and profane meddling with the Supreme, is *bad, very bad.* What! shall weak short-sighted mortals who cannot understand themselves, pretend to explain the mode of their Creator's existence? Is it for them thus to distinguish the infinite into parts and persons, and hypostases, and I know not what strange monstrous terms; to scrutinize the everlasting essence and anatomize the universal spirit. Intolerable presumption! yet this they do in our "*apostolic Church,*" where all that I have cited, and much more of the same disgusting language is ordered to be said or sung fourteen times a year! Is not *this bad?*

In a similar manner the creeds deal with the person of Christ, so confounding, dividing, distinguishing and changing; speaking of him first in one sense then in another, he sometimes appears one person, sometimes two, now half a person and presently no person at all. He is God; he is man; he is God and man. He is a "perfect God," and a "perfect man; yet, he is not two but one Christ." He is "one altogether by unity of person," for "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man so God and man is one Christ," and yet, after all, *though he is but one* altogether, he is "equal to the Father as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father as touching his Man hood. Such a *farrago*

is more like children playing at *cross questions*, than men in their sober senses giving an account of their religious belief. The church of England declares a belief in this double, it might just as well be called treble, view of the person of *Christ*, to be necessary to salvation. This doctrine except a man do keep whole and undefiled he shall without doubt everlastingly perish; "in the face of which" denunciations I venture to say, this doctrine also is *bad*.

Now take a peep at the thirty-nine Articles. Look at the article respecting original sin as it is called, which is founded on the notion that God made the first man good but suffered a malignant spirit to seduce him; and that by the sin of this one man all mankind became depraved; and, that this original or birth sin "in every person born into this world deserveth God's wrath and damnation;" meaning I suppose by damnation, as usual, the most excruciating torments to all eternity. Look at the article on justification; "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works; as if the *accounting* a person to be what he really is not, were any thing more than a fiction. Look at the article about "Predestination and Election," only look at the first paragraph, and you will there perceive the full truth and force of the latter part which assures us that "As the godly consideration of Predestination and of our Election in Christ is full of sweet and unspeakable comfort, to godly persons and such as feel in themselves the working of the spirit of Christ: so, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less dangerous than desperation." Look at article thirty-one in which, we are told that "the offering of Christ once made, is that perfected redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world both original and actual." Here we learn a very welcome piece of news, that all sins past, present and to come are satisfied for. Our article forgot to add that this also is a

most sweet, pleasant, and comfortable doctrine. Look at the article of "the Lord's supper," and if you can make *any* sense of it, compare it with the Catechism on the same point. Look at article twenty which informs us, that "the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith:" an evident falsehood, unless by the Church he meant the King; a figure of speech too bold perhaps to be admitted. Look at these articles; look at all the thirty-nine; and pray do not forget to give a little attention to the eighth which though it is not very long, contains a great deal: "the three Creeds, the Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commouly called the Apostles' Creed ought thoroughly to be received and believed; for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scriptures." When you have looked at all these things and read them, *think* five minutes, I ask no more, but just five minutes do *think*, and at the end of that time, say whether I have gone too far, in affirming that the doctrines of the Church of England are VERY BAD.

In my next, I shall show that the Church established is BAD in its influence, In the mean time, I am,

PLAIN SPEAKER.

UNITARIANS AND DEISTS.

NO. III.

"Some of the Unitarians are now showing their intimate relationship with the Deists, by receiving them into their churches.—So we learn from the Monthly Repository, the organ of that body."

New Baptist Magazine, August, 1826.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR

Having shown in my last that all the knowledge which the wisest of the Heathen sages acquired, respecting the certainty of a future state of existence, was faint and unsatisfactory to the mind, I proceed now with the same subject.

Had not philosophy, or what to me is the same thing, the religion of nature, shown its utmost force, and put forth all its vigor, in the great masters of Athens and Rome? And was it able to do any thing for them, but to afford just light enough to discover its own errors and defects; just light enough to refer them to some better guide? Had not its votaries been tossed to and fro, among the variety of systems, which human wit had invented; until they were left at last in total darkness, in absolute uncertainty, unable to decide amongst themselves, and influenced by nothing more than some dark hints of ancient tradition? Did not that become one of the most flourishing sects, among the ancient philosophers, which professed to doubt of every thing? And accordingly do we not find the great ornament of this sect, Cicero, no less a man than Cicero himself, who for "calm reason, and glowing eloquence," is perhaps beyond any other man, whose name history has transmitted to us, not excepting the modern Theophilus himself; even Cicero declaring on some of the most important points, that it was impossible to determine on which side lay (not the certainty for that the sages did not pretend to discover) even the greatest probability; concluding that in all such cases, it is easier for him to say what is not his opinion, than what is? Nay, professing that in the grand article of a first cause, if he had discovered the truth, he durst not have divulged it, putting the supposition as matter of probability, that the philosophers in general were Atheists.

Men began then to be sensible, that human reason was, of itself, a very insufficient director, and grew weary of the common delusions from pretended revelations. Oracles, omens, portents, were generally exploded; the old fables of Elysian fields and Pluto's kingdom were grown ridiculous; and throwing them away to poets and to painters, as children do their toys, when they are tired of them, they looked around for something new. Can this be called a satisfactory degree of information? At one time there were more than three hundred opinions entertained among them about the chief good, and ultimate end of action. The objects of devotion amounted to thirty thousand, for nature had been exceedingly prolific in gods and goddesses, and there

were no less than three Jupiters or supreme gods among them. In short they had multiplied their scandalous deities to such a degree, and modelled their worship in such a manner, that Cicero, and the others of the wiser sort among them, were even ashamed of such a rabble: not to mention, that the prevalence of the Epicurean philosophy had rendered both, in a great measure insignificant. Such was their condition, when nature was their only guide, that amidst all their gods and lords, they were without God in the world.

W. J. may say, that the fault was not in nature, but in the fools who would not attend to her instructions; but supposing he had lived among them, with no other instruction than they had, what reason have we to believe, that he would have been wiser or better than Cicero, than Aristotle, than Socrates? It strikes me that W. J. and deists in general, are not aware, or do not like to acknowledge, how much they are indebted to that revelation, which God has given us by Jesus Christ. Having seen an egg made to stand on a smooth surface without any assistance he thinks he could have done what baffled the grandees of Spain, before they saw Columbus give it the gentle tap on the table.

W. J. does not like N. Jones's "immense gulf" subsisting between the Christians and the Unbelievers. Now, I conceive that this "immense gulf" means nothing more than the necessary impossibility of identifying things essentially different, and diametrically opposite, such as height and depth, light and darkness, virtue and vice, belief and unbelief. These, I apprehend, are separate and directly opposite things, and if so, not all the wit of man, can make either of the two things one and the same thing; this I think presents a gulf so immense, that W. J. cannot pass over it. But as to this I will not be positive, if he can do, what in his communication he thinks possible, viz. to account for the supernatural parts of the Christian history, without supposing that Christ either performed, or pretended to perform the miracles ascribed to him, &c. If he can do this, I shall no longer dispute with him the passage of this immense gulf.

W. J. is not pleased with N. J. for denying "the possibility of any religious sympathy between Christians and Unbelievers." But W. J. knows, as well as I do, that there has been, and is, and will be, a sympathy of a peculiar kind, existing among persons of kindred sentiments and of kindred minds, and of the same society; and that an apostle whom W. J. quotes, recommends a general sympathy with all men, and an especial one with the household of faith. I understand N. J. to mean that sympathy which arises from their being brethren and believers in Christ.

W. J. says that some of the wisest and the best of Christians have strenuously upheld the truth and importance of natural religion, and that Paul himself is stated to have declared, that God hath not left himself without a witness, &c. He then assumes, "But if the voice of Nature, thus plainly declares the existence of God, it cannot be considered as silent on the subject of a future state, for the two doctrines, I contend, are inseparably connected, and the one cannot consistently be denied, while the other is admitted." Yes, W. J. may now so contend, but had he lived with Socrates, Aristotle and Cicero, would he have so contended? If he had not heard the plainer declarations of the voice of Revelation, which they did not hear, would he have so contended? Then why did not they so contend? Would the keener penetration of W. J. have carried him so much farther into futurity, than that of those venerable sages? I think it quite enough for him to assume to come up to them, without attempting to leave them so far behind.

W. J. proceeds to deduce from the attributes, perfections, and works of God, what must have been his design in bringing mankind into existence, and humbly, but confidently, submits, "that the benevolence of God is not apparent, unless we consider the present world as a state of education, intended to fit us, by moral and intellectual culture, for higher scenes of action and enjoyment in futurity." Now, here I ask again, if without the knowledge that W. J. has derived from the Christian Revelation, which he seems to hold so cheap, and to which I doubt not he is indebted for every clear view of the doctrine of a fu-

ture life, and an immortal state, which the gospel has brought to light, or illuminated so as to justify that mode of expression concerning it, and which by the bye, is the expression by which "Paul himself is related to have declared it." Without any knowledge of this Revelation, I ask, would W. J. have submitted to us so confidently his view of the design of God in the creation of man, and of his plan of discipline to prepare us for futurity? Did the sages of old from the light of nature reason so? Does W. J. reason so from no higher principle than the religion of nature? I think not. The light of the gospel has shined, and the mind of W. J. in his youuger days was impressed with it, and enlightened by it. First impressions are seldom eradicated, and W. J. from the circumstances through which he has passed cannot be considered a pupil of the goddess of nature. Having been both a Christian student, and a Christian teacher, it may not be, to say the least, improbable, that he should attribute the knowledge of those truths to the deductions of reason on the works and ways of God in creation and providence, the first principles of which had, like seeds, been sown in the mind by the gospel revelation. I shall resume the subject in my next, and conclude the present by wishing W. J. and also all who have turned their backs on that treasure, to which once their face and heart were directed, to seriously re-consider the subject, and to return to that city which they have forsaken to pursue their journey in a comparatively trackless desert, which is surrounded by fogs and darkness.

I am Sir,

JOHN RAGLAND.

Hindley.

MEMOIR,

OF THE LATE REV. JOHN YATES, OF LIVERPOOL.

(See Christian Reflector, Vol. ii. p. 278.)

We extract the following from Mr. Shepherd's Sermon occasioned by the death of Mr. Yates, from John v. 35. "He was a burning and a shining light, &c." p. 16—26.

THE appropriateness of this image to your late venerated pastor, I deliberately reassert; and challenge the recollection of

his numerous friends, especially of those who have had for the longest period the happiness of his acquaintance, in proof of the correctness of my assertion, while I endeavour briefly to trace his history and his character as a christian minister. In that character he loved to be recognized.—In that character the incidents and circumstances of his life will be found uniformly to merge.

Born and brought up a Protestant Dissenter, in what has usually been denominated the Presbyterian connection, at an early period of his life he indicated a wish to devote himself to the ministry in that sect. To this wish his excellent mother, then his surviving parent, conceded; and while he continued to reside under her roof, he was instructed in the rudiments of classical literature, at the grammar school of his native town. (*) Of the extent of his acquirements at this seminary, I am not exactly informed; but it must have been respectable to enable him to procure, as he did, at about the age of seventeen, admission into the Warrington Academy. At this institution, which may boast of having furnished to the dissenting body, many of their most eloquent preachers and most distinguished divines, he had the good fortune to have, as guides of his studies, tutors of the first eminence; of all of whom he was accustomed in after life to speak with the greatest respect; but the late highly esteemed Dr. Enfield, who was one of their number, I have frequently heard him mention in terms of peculiar regard. Under the direction of these able teachers he devoted to assiduous study, talents of no common order; and at the same time uniformly preserved a character for strict regularity, and exemplary correctness of moral conduct. Steadily acting upon these principles, he went through the usual course of academical discipline in such a manner, as to gain the applause of competent judges, and to inspire his friends with the hope that he would become, as he soon did become, "A burning and a shining light" in our churches. It was a judicious practice pursued in the system of education established at the Warrington Academy, to give marked encouragement to elegance of English composition, and to correctness and energy of delivery. Being endowed by nature with superior organs of speech, and an accurate ear, and having imbibed in the course of his studies the principles of just taste, our friend, by his essays as a preacher, won the attention and admiration of his auditors; and his varied qualifications soon recommended him to the notice of this dissenting congregation, which then assembled for the purposes of public worship in Kaye Street, in this town, and the members of which, in the year 1777, unanimously invited him to assume amongst them the pastoral office.

Of the importance of this office, and of the weighty duties which it imposed upon him, our lamented friend was duly sensible; and he applied himself to the discharge of those duties

(*) Bolton-le-Moors.

with ardent and enlightened zeal. In his preparations for conducting the services of the Lord's Day, he was laborious; for though he spoke fluently, when he sat down to commit his thoughts to writing, the fastidiousness of his judgment caused him to compose slowly. His wish, also, to keep up the attention of his auditors, by the variety of his topics, made him unwilling to avail himself of the license, which we preachers generally assume, of repeating, after a reasonable interval, discourses which we have previously delivered. If, then, his sermons occasionally seemed to be of too slight a texture, or in some scattered passages to transgress the limits of just taste, this was not the result of indolence or carelessness on his part, but it proceeded from a too earnest wish to interest you by novelty. But the duties of the Sabbath were by no means the limit of the spiritual labours of our friend. His congregation was numerous, and he was attentive in his ministerial visits to every class of the people, who had entrusted themselves to his spiritual direction. At the same time he habitually frequented the society of the most intelligent men, and of men of the most cultivated minds, then resident in this town. His professional duties, then, occupying so much of his time, and even his intellectual associations, diverting his mind to miscellaneous reading, I have not to record that he acquired that extent and accuracy of what we call scholarship, or that profundity of science, which can only be attained by an exclusiveness of attention, and habits of seclusion, which were incompatible with his views of duty. But on the general topics of intellectual discussion, he could speak with acuteness, clearness, and precision; for he had an almost intuitive perception of truth; and there was one book which he studied deeply. With the holy scriptures, as elucidated by the soundest commentators, he was familiarly acquainted.

In no long space of time after his entrance on his pastoral office, he formed a matrimonial connection, the happiness of which was never interrupted till the hand of death severed from him the partner of his destinies, whose worth they could appreciate, and perhaps they only, who, in confidential and domestic intercourse with her, became sensible of the soundness of her judgment on all matters of importance, of her strict regard to principle, and of the pure benevolence of her heart.

By the event of his marriage, our departed friend was raised from a state of limited circumstances, within which, however, his honourable prudence caused him to circumscribe his wants, to a condition of comparative affluence; and when he found himself in process of time surrounded by a numerous family, he availed himself of the opportunities which presented themselves to his just judgment, of increasing his property, and it is generally believed that in this respect his efforts were successful.

I mix sufficiently with the world to be well aware to what hacknied and invidious remarks a minister of the Gospel is

liable whose substance increases in the land. But no dread of commonplace flippancy shall make me shrink from this topic; and on this point I confidently advance these principles; that it is the duty of a parent, if it be in his power, so to provide for his children, as to enable them to maintain that station in society, to which, by the incidents of his life, he has been led to habituate them; and that the possession and accumulation of wealth constitute no offence, provided that it is acquired with integrity, that in its pursuit no duty is neglected, and that its use is guided by the dictates of virtuous feeling.

On the first of these provisos it is unnecessary, on the present occasion, and I disdain, to say a single word. And were I formally to ask you who were so long his stated hearers, whether your late minister was neglectful of his pastoral duties, it would be a mere flourish of oratory, because, by the regulations of religious assemblies, you cannot at the instant answer the enquiry. But your negative is implied by your voluntary and respectful attendance at the committal of his mortal remains to the grave. It is implied in the numerous assembly met together on the present occasion. It is implied in the deep impression which was visible on many a countenance, when, the last time I appeared in this place, I became your organ in pouring out a prayer to God, that he would smooth his passage through the valley of the shadow of death. On this subject I appeal to the recollection of those of you who have listened with teachable minds to his religious instructions; and who have entered into the spirit of his devotional exercises, which were so rich, so copious, so fervent, and yet so chastened, the evident emanations of reverential awe and enlightened piety. I appeal to those whom he has so often visited in the time of their sickness and of their sorrow. I appeal to the rich, to whom he has pointed out objects worthy of their beneficent aid; and to the poor, whom he has taught to adorn their station by the virtues of industry and honesty. I appeal to those whom he has admonished of error, as well as to those whom he has encouraged in the way of well-doing. Believe me, my friends, his heart was in his office. As he began his pastoral labours with zeal, with zeal he continued them. Sincere were the aspirations which he breathed for your welfare as men and as christians. Of him it may be truly said, that

> "In his duty, prompt at every call,
> "He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all."

And as truly may it be said, that in the enjoyment of affluence he lived not to himself. He was simple in his tastes, and strictly temperate in his pleasures; and in the detailed arrangement of those conveniences which his circumstances justified him in possessing, and of the indulgences which his growing infirmities

required, the intelligent eye could easily perceive, that, whatever he might concede to comfort, he sacrificed nothing to vanity. Selfishness was no ingredient in his character. I well remember, years and years ago, his reading to me, with his peculiar animation, the following passage from the sermons of the late venerable Mr. Walker:—"The idea of giving pleasure is that secret of the soul which mixes with, and gives zest to, all our indulgences. Our very meals, our very cups, are tasteless and joyless, unless we have a fellow to partake of them." He acted up to the spirit of this sentiment. He was fond of the cheerfulness of society, and his door was opened wide in hospitality. At his dwelling, those who had the slightest claim to his notice, found a friendly welcome. Though he turned away in sorrow from irreclaimable profligacy and vice, he never turned away from misfortune. He "saved the poor that cried, the needy, and him that had none to help him." And here I will not dwell upon upon his frequent and munificent donations to our public charities; but I would remind you of what is more apt to be overlooked—of his exertions to put and preserve those charities upon a proper footing. Nor, could I ascertain the extent of his private liberalities, which I know to have been very considerable, would I dilate upon that subject; but I would rather point out to your notice the pains which he took to ascertain the real situation of the objects upon which those liberalities were bestowed; and especially the judgment which he evinced, in affording or procuring by his influence, for meritorious individuals who wanted the means of making the first step in life, opportunities of permanently providing for themselves. The mere bestowal of money is frequently the effort of irresolute indolence, to get rid of importuuity; but to enter thus kindly, minutely and affectionately, as our friend did, into the concerns of others, demands the union of a discerning intellect and of a compassionate heart. And in this wide range of charitable exertions, he was especially alive to the interests of the young. The schools which have been established under his auspices, aud by his munificence, evince his anxiety to train up children in the way in which they should go, in hopes that, when old, they might not depart therefrom.

It will be easily believed that an individual of this extensive reach of benevolence was exemplary in the discharge of his duties of domestic life, and that he anxiously studied the welfare of his immediate connections. As a husband, he was affectionate; as a father, he was judiciously kind. Upon his children, in their early days, he laid steadily, but gently, the hand of restaint, till by just degrees, as they increased in years, authority was relaxed into influence, and influence mellowed into confidence. He adopted every plan which approved itself to his well-judging mind, to promote their improvement in knowledge and in virtue. It becomes not me to point out how far his efforts were success-

ful. I stand here, alas! to speak of the dead and not of the living. But this I will say, that to our departed friend it was a source of pure satisfaction, that the incidents of his life afforded him the opportunity of almost daily intercourse with all but one of his offspring, after their settlement in the world; and that when they assembled, as they statedly did, at his table, had he given way to the pride of his heart, he might have exclaimed to the casual or invited visitor, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethen to dwell together in unity!"

Though the life of our friend was on the whole a happy one, he was by no means exempt from calamity. He was doomed to behold the partner of his joys and sorrows sink by slow degrees to the tomb. It was his lot to weep over the grave of two of his children. He had also his professional griefs, disappointments and mortifications. His latter years were clouded with infirmities, which at length gave occasion to the accident which stretched him for months upon the couch of pain and of irksomeness. This suspension of the active powers undermined a constitution at all times feeble, and at length terminated his laborious and useful life. But this and all his afflictions he bore with calm placidity and pious resignation, uniformly acting up to the spirit of the last words which he was heard to utter, "The will of God be done."

TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS.

We copy the following excellent Letter from Billinge's (Liverpool) Tuesday's Advertiser; and here we recognise in the style as well as in the Signature, an Old Friend. We recommend the subject to the serious attention of our readers.

To the Editor of Tuesday's Advertiser.

LONDON FEB. 1. 1827.

SIR,

I HAVE just seen your publication of the 30th ult, in which one of your correspondents, under the signature "A Protestant Dissenter," expresses his surprise "that for the last thirty or forty years the Dissenters should scarcely have made an effort to procure relief from the operation of the Test Acts." That this should have been the case is one among other proofs that freedom from absolute persecution, and comparative religious liberty, have produced the effect of lowering the proud feeling of resistance to ecclesiastical establishments in connexion with state government. Sufficiently humiliating is the thought, but so it is, that the young Dissenter scarcely knows any thing of the nature of those laws which hang over his head, and against

which his ancestors earnestly protested and manfully resisted. The statute book is, nevertheless, still polluted with the same enactments, and the annual Bill of Indemnity passes without even a thought of its tremendous import.

It is high time again to bring this important subject before the consideration of every Protestant Dissenter, (not absolutely because the slave to the "powers that be," for alas! how have too many degenerated,) and to devise means for at least disseminating information in many points connected with it through the kingdom. The Protestant Dissenters must be prepared to act in *unison*, and to forego the petty differences in their numerous creeds and shades of belief, before any great point, in which all are *equally concerned*, can be attained.

It is not much in favour of the exertions of the *Deputies of the Dissenters*, to be under the necessity of reminding their country brethren that such a body has constantly met in London for nearly the last century. It may also be thought some reflection on their activity, to say that the express object in view in organizing them was that a permanent body might be in constant readiness to act, and above all things to keep the question of the "Corporation and Test Acts" ever before their eyes. How far they have done their duty in this *main* point (for in *small* matters they are entitled to the credit of usefulness,) let the present state of things decide. To revive the old spirit of liberty among the Dissenters, and re-kindle the fire which burnt in the bosoms of their ancestors, ought to be the object of all who are not content to remain the willing tools of power. It may not here be irrelevant to notice, that to the exertions of the Dissenters of Benn's garden Chapel, in Liverpool, in 1732, and following years, were in a great degree owing the efforts then so vigorously made to shake off these disgraceful Acts. A meeting of deputies from the three (then recognized) denominations of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, was at that time formed, and these have purported to represent the Dissenters generally to the present time. To infuse new life into this body would be to rouse the Protestant Dissenters of the United Kingdom to a sense of what is due to the memory of their ancestors, no less than to their posterity. This, then, is the point to be aimed at, Long habits of inactivity have made the Dissenters forget their power, and the unanimity with which their general meetings were formerly collected in the metropolis. At present the Dissenting Deputies (from motives of convenience) are sent only from the metropolitan congregations. On any emergency delegates might, as formerly, join their deliberations from the religious societies in the country. Let the question then be considered whether the time is not arrived *for remodeling the existing state of the representation of the Dissenters*; whether approaching circumstances do not require an aggregate meeting of deputies from every sect, to introduce such

alterations into the constitution, as the lapse of a century have rendered necessary? Some change must shortly take place, and what that shall be remains with the body at large. Insulated movements will do nothing. Petitions from small communities will meet with no attention. One sect may move, but the effect is worse than useless, if paralyzed by the supineness of another. To the metropolis we naturally look as the centre on which any combined machinery must turn. And here we come back to the present Dissenting Deputies, as the nucleus round which to gather for future and more consistent operations.

In the words of a writer in the Monthly Repository, "to direct a popular effort requires zeal, and a degree of energy in which *new* institutions more peculiarly abound. *Old* institutions, for whatever purpose formed, gather from many causes the rust of inactivity, and find difficulties which those that spring out of immediate popular excitement cast aside. Perhaps the Deputies will find that some revival, some infusion of new force, will be expedient to enable them to rouse and direct that sort of effort which a popular cause requires in its advocates. They have of late been sometimes energetic in resolution, but tardy in execution. The spirit seems to have been willing, but the machinery weak. They are moreover divided in opinion on the very principle involved. They are afraid to take the broad ground, the only ground in fact, on which their *Parliamentary friends will ever consent to support them.* They have not all made up their minds to grant to others what they ask for themselves, and so far they are behind even the Catholics whom they dread."

From every consideration of the state of the Protestant Dissenters we may come to this conclusion: that the organization which once served the body, is no longer efficient. The state of the representation is bad. The Parliament *must be reformed*, either from within or from without. It possesses a considerable fund, and has, what may be termed, the ear of the government, more than any merely temporary establishment might be expected to obtain. But new life must be infused into it, and the Dissenters throughout the country must show their determination not to rest satisfied with inactivity. Let the deputies but give the word, and the legislature would find the voice of the Dissenters was not one to be despised. Till the effort *does* originate with them, nothing effective will be done. The country societies must regain their lost weight in the scale. They must remember that they *have* representatives and show a determination to bring them back to a sense of duty. In Liverpool probably commenced the proceedings which ended in the permamanent establishment of the Deputies. Where better could originate the work of regenerating them?

I am Sir, &c,

H. T.

A CHEAP ROAD TO HEAVEN.

A Catholic Association.

THIS Spiritual Association of Roman Catholics promoted by Mr. ———of Wigan, in Lancashire, is solely meant to obtain from Almighty God an increase of such blessings and graces, spiritual and corporeal, as may most conduce to his honour and glory, and the salvation of the souls of all the associates, particularly speedy delivery from the pains of purgatory, for the departed souls of this society, which favours we humbly hope to receive by the adorable sacrifices of the mass offered up for that end, and the prayers enjoined to be said by the associates themselves, which are expressed in the following conditions.

1. Each member to contribute the sum of 6d. in the month of December, Yearly.

2. A committee of persons, namely,——— ———, Wigan, ——— ———, Standish, ——— ———, Hindley, to receive and be answerable for regular payment of the Subscribers' money to the Priests who offer the masses, according to the contributions fixed by the Bishop, for saying masses.

3. Two masses to be offered every month, for the living and dead, of the society, or oftener if the subscribed money will allow.

4. Every member to say, kneeling, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Apostles' Creed, once every week, for the intention of the association.

5. Only communicants, (and those of all ages,) will be admitted.

6. The above is meant to be continued, as long as it is supported by a sufficient number of subscribers to carry it on.

7. Each member, not paying his, or her, yearly sum of 6d. in the month of December, shall be excluded from all the benefits of the association or pay one shilling to be re-admitted.

N. B. Souls departed, before the commencement of this association, if their names are entered, and if their living friends pay the sum of 3d. only, will reap equal benefit by the prayers, if they stand in need of help. The small contribution of 6d. and the very small sum of 3d. (that the names of the deceased may be entered, and paid by their living friends,) are affixed that the poor may be able to enter into the association, but people of better circumstances, by paying a greater sum, will do a charitable act, by conducing to the general good of the members, and assisting perhaps, near and dear relations, who may be crying in the flames of purgatory.

Take pity on me, at least you my friends, take pity on me. Job xix. 21.

It is recommended to the members, to place these conditions in their lodging rooms, or where they may be frequently reminded of them.

Obituary.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF YORK.

1827. Jan, 5, died this illustrious Prince, eldest brother of the King Heir Presumptive to the Crown, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

For a fortnight, this death, with the lying in state and the funeral procession, attracted a large share of the public attention. The sympathy of the people has been manifested to a greater degree than had been expected, and we are inclined to rejoice at the prevalence of the humane feeling that laments the fall of one of the possessors of nearly the highest earthly dignity, forgetful of private failings and political differences. We cannot conscientiously unite in the extravagant eulogiums that have been pronounced both from the pulpit and the press on the Duke of York's character, private or public; but we think it would be bad feeling to rake up at this moment his past errors. The condition of a Prince is full of moral danger, and his character should be estimated with some indulgence: at the same time, the public interest requires that all notorious infractions of the laws of God and man in private life, and grievous blunders in public life, should not be covered with seeming approbation. The deceased Prince paid in some measure the forfeit of his own errors; dying without a home, and with the burthen of his debts pressing heavily upon his heart. His example is instructive to persons in the upper ranks of life: may they learn from it that no condition absolves men from moral responsibility, that sooner or later every man falls into the situation which his own character has created for him, and that splendid rank and high power are soon lost and forgotten, whilst virtue, even of the humblest description, is of universal estimation and lasting remembrance! "Most High," "Most Mighty," are phrases which savour of cruel irony as enunciated over the dead body of the deceased Prince; but his reputation as "The Poor Soldier's Friend" has caused many an honest tear to drop at the mention of his name, and will be his best claim upon the favourable regard of posterity. *Christian Reformer.*

Jan. 10. after a short illness, JOHN JONES, LL. D., author of the Greek English Lexicon, and various works on Philology and Divinity. He was educated at the New College Hackney, and was a favourite pupil of the late learned Gilbert Wakefield's. He exercised the ministry amongst the Protestant Dissenters for some years, at Halifax and other places? but for the latter part of his life had devoted himself exclusively to classical and theological studies. He was a laborious and indefatigable scholar; and a quick and eager writer. His opinions were decidedly Unitarian. He was fond of theory, and all his works are characterized by great peculiarlities. His love of the novel, and the astounding in theology, prevented his obtaining popularity as a writer: yet some of his works will, we think, be long consulted, and especially his "Illustrations of the Four Gospels," a book which contains many felicitous hints and conjectures which the theological student will prize, and may turn to good account. Dr. Jones's excessive labours were injurious to a constitutional temperament of great excitability, and he may be said to have died prematurely; and the literary and theological world, as well as his own family, have sustained a real loss by his death. One feature of Dr. Jones's character was peculiarly amiable, viz. the ready and useful patronage which he extended to young and friendless students. He corrected with his dying hand the sheets of a pamphlet containing some proposals for the benefit of young learners, and of this class of them particularly. He was a large contributor to the later volumes of the Monthly Repository. Many of the readers of that work deemed his papers eccentric; but we know, that living and dying he relied upon the soundness of his own theories, and confidently anticipated the suffrages of posterity. *ibid.*

Jan. 21, ANTHONY ROBINSON, Esq., of *Hatton Garden, London*, aged 65. He was a native of Cumberland. His parents were members of the Church of England. Early in life he became a Dissenter, and went to Bristol, and was baptized by immersion, and entered the Baptist Acade-

my, under Dr. Caleb Evans. Probably, from the unsettled state of his mind, he did not continue long in the ministry. Being possesed of property, he entered into business in London, as a sugar-baker, by which he is understood to have acquired considerable wealth. For some time, he seceded from the Dissenters, but had latterly returned to their communion. He was a man of uncommon powers of mind, which he displayed to great advantage in conversation. He was also a nervous writer, and had he devoted himself to composition, must have acquired great power over the reading public. Many years ago, he published a "History of Persecution," and the "Causes and Consequences of War," and a pamphlet containing severe strictures upon Mr. Hall's sermon against Atheism and the French Revolution, the political part of which appeared to Mr. Robinson and many others of the preacher's early acquaintance to be a dereliction of the principles of freedom. Mr. Robinson wrote occasionally in the Monthly Repository: his later signature was "Homo." Some letters of his, in the character and signature of "A Church man," are curious. He was an earnest seeker after truth, but could scarcely bring himself to hope that he had found it: hence his religious views were tinged with melancholy. But whatever might be his opinions, his principles were virtuous, and his life christian; and few men have attained to a character of more sterling worth, or died more justly respected. *ibid.*

Jan. 25th at *Islington*, after a short but severe illness, the Rev. JOHN EVANS, LL. D., for many years pastor of the General Baptist Congregation in Worship Street. He was a native of Wales, and was destined from early youth to the Christian ministry. He was educated at the Baptist Academy, Bristol, under his relation and friend Dr. Caleb Evans; and from Bristol he went to Aberdeen on an exhibition left by Dr. Ward, the Gresham Professor. Here he graduated M. A., and afterwards passed one session at Edinburgh. He entered into public life, we believe, as the minister of the congregation with which he continued happily connected to the close of his days. For many years he was engaged in the education of youth, and was for some time the tutor of the young men trained for the ministry by the denomination to which he belonged. He had the pen of a ready writer, and published many works, chiefly small, connected with his profession as a minister and a schoolmaster, and with miscellaneous literature. One of his books, "The Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World," has had an almost unprecedented sale, and has been the means of diffusing a correct knowledge of the differences of opinion between mankind on religious subjects throughout Great Britain and America. This volume exhibits a rare instance of impartiality, and by the justice with which all sects are treated, as well as by the reflections and arguments which are affixed in favour of candour, has, we doubt not, contributed much to the liberal spirit which characterizes the present times. On proper occasions, Dr. Evans never shrunk from the avowal and defence of his own opinions; he stood forth in particular as the advocate of the creed and the practice of the General Baptists. In the midst of controversy, however, he commonly exemplified the charitable spirit which he recommended. He was in private and in public life a truly amiable man. His good temper and his catholic principles procured for him a large acquaintance and correspondence, and enabled him to number amongst his friends a wide circle of persons of various religious communions. On numberless occasions he showed his kindness of heart in the indulgent estimate which he formed of the characters, talents, and productions of persons who appealed to his liberality, and very many are there who have received charitable assistance at his hands. Dr Evan's love of books was intense. This passion for literature was the relief and solace of the latter years of his life, when bodily infirmities cut him off in a great degree from his

social intercourse. His was a busy, though not an eventful life. Constant agreeable occupation was a source of happiness. Such a man could not but be loved in his own family. He enjoyed, in fact, a peculiar degree of domestic felicity. His very infirmities were scarcely to be pitied by those that wituessed the filial offices which they were the occasion of bringing forth. A few years ago, Dr. Evans sustained a grievous affliction in the death of a son, just entering the ministry with great promise; but he bore this trial with Christian fortitude; still it had an evident and habitual effect upon his mind, as may be seen in his later publications, which indicate that he considered the time not far distant when his own spirit would be reunited with that of the beloved youth in the immortal state. By his family, his congregation and religious denomination, and by many of various parties, Dr. Evans will be very long remembered with respect and tender esteem, as a good man, a useful writer, an affectionate pastor, an enlightened and consistent Protestant Dissenter, a philanthropist in deeds as well as words, and a temperate and firm friend of civil and religious liberty. *ibid.*

Nov. 17, at *York*, at an advanced age, and after a painful and lingering illness, which he bore with patience and resignation, Mr. J. WALKER, one of the original founders of the Society of Unitarian Baptists of that city. In early life Mr. Walker carried on the trade of a watch-case maker in London, but having come into possession of a small competency, and his health being delicate, he quitted business and retired to York. Here he joined the late Mr. Francis Mason and his friends, who, from their personal studies of the Scriptures, had been led to give up their Trinitarian Creed. An interesting account of this little society may be seen in Mr. Eaton's "Narrative of the York Baptists." Mr. Walker was an occasional preacher, and officiated as often as the state of his health permitted. Mr. Walker was sincere, conscientious and upright, and of such unbending integrity that no one could ever charge him with time-serving If he erred, it was on the other side. His zeal and intrepidity despised alike the fear of man and the praise and fashion of the world. His eye was single and his heart was upright. His piety was sincere and his moral conduct most exemplary. He married for his second wife a daughter of the late excellent Mr. Simpson, of London, by whom he has left a large family to deplore his loss.

On Saturday, Feb. 3rd, aged 45, after a short confinement to his room, Mr. Richard Wainwright, a member of the Unitarian Society, meeting in Hunter Street, Liverpool. He was a man of the strictest integrity, and filled for many years, a place of trust to the satisfaction of his employer. His ideas of God and his government led him to contentment, and he might be truly said to be a man of cheerful piety.

Lately the Rev. Dr. Plunket, Catholic (titular) Bishop of Meath, in his 89th year. For nearly half a century he presided over one of the largest Bishoprics in Ireland, and had the reputation, among all parties, of uniting as many of the qualities of the Christian Pastor, as were ever concentrated in one person.

Feb. 7th, Dr. G. Pelham, Bishop of Lincoln, in consequence of a severe cold, caught at the Duke of York's Funeral.

June 9, at *Newhaven*, in *Connecticut*, U. S., the Rev. JEDEDIAH MORSE, D. D. LL. D.; the author of the American Geography, and of many other valuable works, and for many years pastor of the first Church in Charlestown, aged 65.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

On Sunday Dec. 31st and Monday Jan. 1st, was celebrated, the second anniversary of the opening of the Unitarian Meeting-House at Salford, Manchester. The Religious services were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Hutton of Leeds, and the Rev. R. B. Aspland, of Chester. Collections to the amount of £50 were made in aid of the debt on the chapel, £350 yet remain to be discharged, which can only be done by the assistance of the Unitarian public.

After the religious service on Monday, about two hundred persons sat down to dinner. Ottiwell Wood, Esq of Liverpool in the chair. A variety of excellent speeches were delivered by the Revds. Dr. Hutton, Robberds, Shepherd, and Beard; Messrs. Shuttleworth, Potter, and John Wood, Esq. M. P. Pleasure and improvement in no small degree, were the fruits of this social meeting.

Removal of Ministers.

The Rev. John Small, of *Coseley*, in *Staffordshire*, and the Rev. J. C. Wallace, of *Totness, Devonshire*, have accepted the office of joint ministers of the Chapel in York Street, St. James's Square, *London*.

The Rev. Henry Clarke, of *Frenchay* near *Bristol*, has accepted an invitation to become the minister of the congregation of Newcastle and Hanley, in the Potteries, Staffordshire.

Opening of a New Unitarian Church in New York,

On Dec. 7th 1826, the new and beautiful Church erected at the corner of Prince and Mercer-streets, for the use of the Second Unitarian Congregation in this city, was dedicated to the service of Almighty God. At an early hour the house was filled to overflowing.

The throne of grace was addressed, and selections of Scripture read by the Rev. William Ware, pastor of the first Unitarian Church in this city.

The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Channing of Boston, founded on Mark xii. 29, 30.

It is about one year since the corner stone of this building was laid with appropriate religious exercises; it has been erected at the expense of a number of spirited and zealous individuals, for the purpose of accommodating those who live in the upper part of the city, and of promoting the pure and simple doctrines of Christianity.—*Christian Inquirer.*

*** The Sermon, delivered by Dr. Channing on the occasion, has produced an astonishing agitation among the Orthodox in America, it is indeed a masterly performance, and will be published in Liverpool in the course of a week or two.

POETRY.

The Saviour's Prayer,—John xvii. 20.

(From " Poetical Illustrations of Passages of Scripture. By Emily Taylor.")

"No, not for these alone I pray,"
The dying Saviour said;
Though on his breast that moment lay
The lov'd disciple's head;

Though to his eye that moment sprung
The kind, the pitying tear,
For those who eager round him hung,
His words of love to hear.

Ah, where, ere yet another morn
Jehovah's house shall gild,
And eager spirits joyful turn,
Their morning praise to yield,—

Ah, where shall then his followers be
Before that morrow's close?
And He, their Master, where will He
His wearied head repose?

That melting thought, and thousand more,
The cross, the crown of pain,
The horrors of the evil hour,
Rush o'er Him—but in vain.

No, not for these alone he prayed,
For all of mortal race,
Whene'er their fervent prayer is made,
Where'er their dwelling-place.

Sweet is the thought when thus we meet
His feast of love to share;
And 'mid the toils of life, how sweet
The memory of that prayer!

O ne'er, in souls that seek his face,
Let strife, let hatred reign,
To tell the unbelieving race
The Saviour prayed in vain!

Universal Hymn of Praise.

(From the New York Christian Inquirer.)

Arise my soul, leave earth behind,
Rouse all the noblest powers of mind,
To praise th' Almighty King;
Let all that fill the earth and sky,
Join in the sacred melody;
In sweetest numbers sing.

Thou sun, the source of light and day,
Due homage to thy Maker pay,
Declare the glories of His name;
And shew how life's by heat sustain'd,
The laws of gravity maintain'd;
The mysteries deep proclaim.

Ye planets that move round the sun,
In harmony you ever run,
With music in each sphere;
His wisdom and his power rehearse
In choicest numbers—loftiest verse,
To list'ning angels near.

Ye waving forests, lowly bend,
Ye murky clouds, in rain descend,
Praise Him who gave you form;

Ye thunders roll, and lightnings fly,
Ye earthquakes, heave in harmony,
To Him who rules the storm.

Thou world of wonders, mighty deep,
Let graceful swells thy bosom sweep,
And honours due accord.
Ye gentle streams, that lave the ground
Ye cataracts, with thund'ring sound,
Give praises to your Lord.

Man, with thy various powers arise,
Present the grateful sacrifice
Of piety and love;
Be thou vicegerent of the earth,
Give voice to all that owe their birth
To Him who rules above.

Ye raptur'd spirits, in each sphere,
Who glow with holy love and fear,
Praise Him who lights your flame;
Let all intelligence now raise
The song of never-ending praise,
To his great hallow'd name. E.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Theophilus in our next.

A Unitarian Convert, on the Marriage Ceremony, came too late for insertion in the present number, it shall have a place in the next month.

Y. is necessarily postponed.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 28. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* APRIL, 1, 1827.

TRINITARIANISM AS IT IS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

Sir,

We sometimes meet with the misrepresentations of party in the religious world. It is I think more commonly the case with those who arrogate to themselves the name of evangelical and orthodox. This is, perhaps not to be wondered at, because opinions which appear to us novel, especially religious opinions, which are out of the canon of orthodoxy, excite an alarm in the breast of the friend of the received system. He is led to apprehend consequences fatal to the interests of religion and virtue; so far it is well; and if it lead him to serious examination, so much the better; but too many shelter themselves in the antiquity of their system, and have, perhaps, no other reason to give in support of its truth but its antiquity.

Persons of this description, having paid little attention either to the foundation or the ultimate tendencies of their system, grow pettish and angry when its real principles are exposed, and its tendencies pointed out, and in their turn they charge others with misrepresentation.

This is very apparent on one part of the popular religious system, viz. the crucifixion and death of God to atone, to satisfy the justice, and to appease the wrath of another, his equal God. The orthodox tell the Unitarians, that, although they charge the Orthodox with believing that God died, it is not and has not been maintained by any orthodox writer. The idea is so shocking that though it is the foundation of the popular religious sys-

tem, its own advocates are both shocked at it, and ashamed to acknowledge it in so many words. Many instances might be quoted from their own writers, in which this sentiment is acknowledged in the strongest language, and from which it might be proved, were it necessary, that the God of the orthodox in parts and passions, in feelings and in the properties of his nature resembles a being of flesh and blood.

The following quotations will certainly prove that the orthodox system is nothing without a murdered and gibbeted God.—Dr. Young, says:

Pardon for infinite Offence! and Pardon
Thro' Means, that speak its Value infinite!
A Pardon bought with Blood! with Blood Divine!
With Blood Divine of Him, I made my Foe!
Persisted to provoke! tho' woo'd, and aw'd,
Blest, and chastiz'd, a flagrant Rebel still!
A Rebel 'midst the Thunders of his Throne!
Nor I alone! a Rebel Universe!
My Species up in Arms! not One exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the Foul, He dies.
Most joy'd for the Redeem'd from deepest Guilt!
As if our Race was held of highest Rank;
And Godhead dearer, as more kind to Man!

Dr. Watts, in his hymns and poems, has the following passages:

Justice was pleased to bruise the God,
And pay its wrongs with heavenly blood.

Is there no shelter from the eye
Of a revenging God?
JESUS, to thy dear wounds I fly,
Bedew me with thy blood.

Pardon, and grace, and boundless love,
Streaming along a SAVIOUR'S blood,
And life, and joys, and crowns above,
Dear purchas'd by a bleeding GOD!!

Did Pity ever stoop so low,
Dress'd in Divinity and blood?
Was ever Rebel courted so
In groans of an expiring GOD.

Behold a God descends and dies.

But it will perhaps be said, that these, Quotations are from

Poets, and Poets have a licence in the use of words, and their language ought not to be construed too rigidly. Well; the following quotations are from the Sermons of the late Rev. James Hervey, the well-known Author of "Theron and Aspasio," and "Meditations," &c. These from so popular a writer may be deemed sufficient; if more were necessary, authors in abundance are at hand. These Quotations being in plain prose, no objection can possibly lie against them, on the score of poetical licence in the use of terms.

Jesus Christ, in his divine nature, is the most high God. The heaven of heavens is the august palace, and royal residence, of this blessed and only potentate. Thousand thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him. The church militant rely on him; the church triumphant adore him; while all the hosts of angels pay homage to him.—Jesus Christ, in his divine nature, is the majestic and most adorable I Am. Self existent and independent. All worlds and all beings, are derived wholly from him, and depend continually upon him. He made the worlds, and upholdeth all things.—

Behold, now, the dignity and excellency of this blood, which is your covert, your hiding place, your strong hold. It has all the power and efficacy, that every divine perfection can give it. It is the blood and righteousness of Him, who is eternal, incomprehensible, and exalted above all blessing and praise. Surely then nothing can bear any proportion to it. Guilt, all guilt, though ever so execrable and horrid, compared with the grandeur and riches of this invaluable blood, is a glow worm before the sun. All manner of sins and blasphemies are blotted out by such an expiation, as the shades of night are abolished by the light of day. Every sinner washed in this blood, must be whiter than the unsullied wool, whiter than the virgin snows. Every sinner, clothed in this righteousness, must be unblameable and unreproveable, even before the eye of Omniscience itself.

Fly to Christ, alarmed sinners. Come under the covert of his blood. Appropriate the blessed Jesus; look upon him and his merit as your own. Thus sprinkle his blood. Sprinkle it upon all your lintel and door-posts; upon all you are, upon all you have, and all you do. Upon your consciences, that they may be purged; upon your souls, that they may be sanctified; upon your works, that they may be accepted—Say, every one for himself; "I am a poor, guilty, helpless creature. But in Jesus Christ, who is full of grace and truth, I *have righteousness and strength*.—I am a poor, polluted, loathsome creature. But Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, and the

brightness of his father's glory, has *loved me, and washed me from my filthiness in his own blood.*—I am by nature, a perverse, a depraved creature; and, by evil practice, a lost damnable sinner. But Jesus Christ, who made the worlds; Jesus Christ, whom heaven and earth adore; even Jesus Christ, himself, came from the mansions of bliss, on purpose to *seek* me; to *save* me; to give himself for me.—And how can I perish, who have such a ransom? how can I be undone, who have such a repairer of my breaches? how can I come into condemnation, who have the blood, not of ten thousand sacrifices; the merit, not of ten thousand angels; but the blood and merit of Jehovah himself for my propitiation?"

In what *did* the Apostle glory?—He gloried in a cross. Strange! what so *scandalous* as a cross? On a cross rebellious slaves were executed. The cross was *execrable* among men, and *acursed* even by God. Yet the Apostle glories in the cross.—Crucifixion not being used among us, the expression does not sound so *harsh*; neither is the idea so *horrid*. But to the ear of a Galatian, it conveyed much the same meaning, as if the Apostle had gloried in a halter; gloried in the gallows; gloried in a gibbet!

Hervey's Sermons.

The following is extracted from Dr. Channing's Sermon, just published, in Liverpool, entitled "The superior tendency of Unitarianism to form an elevated Religious Character." This may be regarded as a very fair picture of the reputed orthodox sentiments. However strong Dr. Channing's language may appear, it is fully justified; even to the letter, by the foregoing quotations. It is quite in vain for those who profess to believe the doctrine of "an infinite satisfaction made by the death of Jesus Christ," to avoid the consequence. If the satisfaction was infinite, it was made by an infinite being, and if it was by his *death*, then an infinite being died!!

"Trinitarians imagine, that there is one view of their system, peculiarly fitted to give peace and hope to the sinner, and consequently to promote gratitude and love. It is this. They say, it provides an *Infinite* substitute for the sinner, than which nothing can give greater relief to the burdened conscience. Jesus, being the second person of the Trinity, was able to make infinite satisfaction for sin; and what, they ask, in Unitarianism, can compare with this; I have time only for two brief replies. And first, this doctrine of an Infinite satisfaction, or as it is improperly called, of an Infinite atonement, subverts, in-

stead of building up, hope, because it argues infinite severity in the government which requires it. Did I believe, what Trinitarianism teaches, that not the least transgression, not even the first sin of the dawning mind of the child, could be remitted without an infinite expiation. I should feel myself living under a legislation unspeakably dreadful, under laws written like Draco's in blood; and instead of thanking the sovereign for providing an infinite substitute, I should shudder at the attributes, which render this expedient necessary. It is commonly said, that an infinite atonement is needed to make due and deep impressions of the evil of sin. But he, who framed all souls and gave them their susceptibilities, ought not to be thought so wanting in goodness and wisdom, as to have constituted a universe, which demands so dreadful and degrading a method of enforcing obedience, as the penal sufferings of a GOD. This doctrine of an Infinite substitute, suffering the penalty of sin, to manifest God's wrath against sin, and thus to support his government, is, I fear, so familiar to us all, that its monstrous character is overlooked. Let me then set it before you, in new terms, and by a new illustration; and if in so doing I may wound the feelings of some who hear me, I beg them to believe that I do it with pain, and from no impulse but a desire to serve the cause of truth.—Suppose then, that a teacher should come among you, and should tell you, that the Creator, in order to pardon his own children, had erected a gallows in the centre of the universe, and had publicly executed upon it, in room of the offenders, an Infinite Being, the partaker of his own Supreme Divinity; suppose him to declare, that this execution was appointed, as a most conspicuous and terrible manifestation of God's justice and wrath, and of the infinite woe denounced by his law; and suppose him to add, that all beings in heaven and earth are required to fix their eyes on this fearful sight, as the most powerful enforcement of obedience and virtue. Would you not tell him, that he calumniated his Maker? Would you not say to him, that this central gallows threw gloom over the universe; that the spirit of a government, whose very acts of pardon were written in such blood, was terror, not paternal love; and that the obedience, which needed to be upheld by this horrid spectacle, was nothing worth? Would you not say to him, that even you, in this infancy and imperfection of your being, were capable of being wrought upon by nobler motives, and of hating sin through more generous views; and that much more the angels, those pure flames of love, need not the gallows and an executed God, to confirm their loyalty? You would all so feel at such teaching as I have supposed; and yet how does this differ from the popular doctrine of atonement? According to this doctrine, we have an Infinite Being sentenced to suffer as a substitute the death of the cross, a punishment more ignominious and agonizing than the gallows, a punishment reserved for slaves and the vilest ma

lefactors; and he suffers this punishment, that he may show forth the terrors of God's law, and strike a dread of sin through the universe.—I am indeed aware that multitudes, who profess this doctrine, are not accustomed to bring it to their minds distinctly in this light; that they do not ordinarily regard the death of Christ, as a criminal execution, as an infinitely dreadful infliction of justice, as intended to show, that, without an infinite satisfaction, they must hope nothing from God. Their minds turn by a generous instinct from these appalling views, to the love, the disinterestedness, the moral grandeur and beauty of the sufferer; and through such thoughts they make the cross a source of peace, gratitude, love and hope; thus affording a delightful exemplification of the power of the human mind to attach itself to what is good and purifying in the most irrational system. But let none on this account, say, that we misrepresent the doctrine of atonement, the primary and essential idea of which is *the public execution of a God*, for the purpose of satisfying justice and awakening a shuddering dread of sin."

Your's, PHILALETHES.

A FUTURE STATE,

Deducible from the Wisdom and Benevolence of the Deity, manifested in the works of Creation.

WHO can comprehend a principle of action destitute of all intelligence, or laws operating of themselves, without either a mind to devise them, or a will to carry them into execution? This then is the conclusion to which all our observations of the frame of nature irresistibly lead us, that there is a Supreme Intelligence, which planned, which produced, and which regulates the world.

Strongly, however, as this conclusion is pressed upon us by those marks of design which appear in the adaptation of this world to the wants and comforts of its inhabitants, much more will this great truth be established, if tokens of a higher and more extensive design than the mere support of our present existence can be pointed out. Without, indeed, some evidence of this ulterior design, the argument for the existence of God, can hardly be considered as complete. For however much and however justly we may admire the exquisite organization and beautiful regularity of nature; however numerous and striking may

be those instances of contrivance which have in view merely the preservation and comfort of this present life: yet in this inquiry the question must ever recur,—for what purpose was life bestowed, and all this grand apparatus provided for its maintenance? What is the object, and what will be the final issue, of our present existence? We know that our continuance here is limited to a very short duration, and that we are subject, moreover, to a multiplicity of evils, which render the boon of life, in itself considered, of somewhat doubtful value. It is a brief and troubled existence. We come; we fret our hour upon the stage; and straight are seen no more. If there be, indeed, a God, we are surely justified in expecting something further, in his designs respecting us, than what we actually experience. For being once led to the idea of God, by those evident marks of contrivance and design, which appear in the world around us, our reason can set no limits to his power or wisdom, nor imagine any motive but that of benevolence to actuate and direct his proceedings. The power which brought all beings and all worlds into existence, must surely retain its controul over all the objects of its own creation; and he who has seen the origin and progress of all things, who is the cause of all effects, the prime mover of all the operations of nature, the giver of all life, and the source of all intelligence, must necessarily possess all knowledge, and be incapable, therefore, of error in any of his plans. Such a being as this cannot be conceived to act from motives of malevolence, for malevolence is only felt where there is the experience or apprehension of injury; and from what quarter can injury reach almighty power? As little can we suppose him capable of acting from caprice; for caprice is indicative of folly or ignorance, and is utterly, therefore incompatible with that perfect knowledge and wisdom which we cannot but ascribe to the creator of all things. Benevolence, then, is the only motive which we can suppose to actuate the Deity, if a Deity indeed exists. Independently of all observation of fact, we cannot but presume, that wherever he bestows existence, he bestows it with a kind intent, and means to make his gift a blessing. But now from reasoning let us revert to fact. Do we find our actual condition

to correspond with these our natural presumptions? Is our existence, considered as finally terminating at death, a boon worthy of such an author as we suppose? I hesitate not to answer in the negative. A life so short, and subject to such a multiplicity of evils; powers of mind so noble, given only to be buried in the grave; an insatiate thirst for knowledge and happiness implanted within us only to tantalize us with a taste of the cup which is soon to be snatched from our longing lips: a mind that directs its ken and wings its eagle flight towards heaven, only to be arrested in its upward course and dragged again to dust and nothingness;—this is what I cannot reconcile with that conclusion which the admirable frame of nature so strongly prompts. An existence such as this, if this indeed be all which is intended for us, appears by no means worthy of that amazing display of power and wisdom which we find in the apparatus provided for its support. In order, then, to account satisfactorily for the appearances of the world, which would otherwise present a dark enigma, we are compelled to suppose that the counsels of Heaven look forward for their completion to a future state.

Jevons' Systematic Morality, Just Published, Vol. II. pp. 174—177.

TRINITARIAN MYSTICISM.

The learned Bishop Beveridge, thus expresses himself on a subject, the belief of which is supposed to be essential to the salvation of man.

"If I say the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be three and every one distinctly God, it is true; but if I say they are three and every one a distinct God, it is false. I may say, the divine persons are distinct in the divine nature; but I cannot say, the divine nature is divided into the divine persons. I may say God the Father is one God, and the Son is one God, and the Holy Ghost is one God; but I cannot say, that the Father is one God, and the Son another God, and the Holy Ghost a third God I may say, the Father begat another who is God: yet I cannot say he begat another God; and from the Father and the Son proceedeth another who is God, yet from the Father and the Son I cannot say proceedeth another God." *Admirable!!!*

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

On the supposed transfer of Moral Responsibility, from Unitarian Conformists to Trinitarian Compulsionists, in the case of the Marriage Ceremony.

SIR,—With your permission, I would again offer a few remarks on the subject, perhaps, the ungracious subject, of the Marriage Ceremony, as it bears upon Unitarians. I am anxious as far as my individual efforts can go, that they should argue upon it like rational beings, and should act with respect to it like persons possessing independence and nobleness of mind; which, I am sorry to say, has not hitherto, in my opinion, been the case. And would that their conduct could be handed down to succeeding generations, more dignified and honorable than the page of history, if they do not arouse themselves, is likely to record! Would that it could present an example of all that is pleasing, firm and intrepid, in the maintenance of a conscience void of offence! But, alas! for their reputation, as Dissenters and Nonconformists, if they do not wipe away the reproach, which their past worldliness, imbecility and pusillanimity, in reference to this question, have cast upon their name!

I am aware, Mr. Editor, that this is plain language. But is it not the truth? I maintain that it is. And in order to lead to repentance for the sacrifice of principle in the past, and a steady regard to conscious rectitude in the future, I solicit the favour of occupying a few pages in your useful Publication.

In the first place, I beg it may be borne in mind, that Unitarians proclaim to the world, that the Marriage Ceremony, being a Trinitarian Ceremony, recognizing a God the Father, a God the Son, and a God the Holy Ghost,—*is a violation of their principles.*

On this admission, then, there are, I think, only two expedients that can be supposed to quiet the conscience, under conformity. The first is, that of protesting. And the second is, that of visiting the guilt of conformity, upon those who compel it by law.

If it be evident as I think it must, that these two positions are nothing but delusions, the case is clear:—Unitarians are *criminal*, when they conform to the Ceremony. They sacrifice their principles—they violate their consciences. They are therefore *guilty*.

In my last communication, (pp. 31, 32,) I think I said sufficient to shew the utter folly, and gross immorality of the protesting-conforming principle of the Free-thinking Unitarian Christians. In my present, I have only, therefore, to combat the more general expedient, that the moral responsibility of conforming to a ceremony which is a violation of the conscience, is transferred from those who conform, to those who compel conformity. This principle, or palliative of conscience, is maintained, I believe, by Unitarians generally; and it was openly avowed by a highly respectable and talented individual of the Unitarian Community, in a public meeting, held in London, at the London Tavern, on the 13 of January, 1819. (Monthly Repository, O. S. Vol. xiv. p. 50.) The speaker is represented to have said, that "Unitarians were obliged, against their principles and consciences, to submit to Athanasian worship.—As a Dissenter on the broadest ground, he should object to such compulsive conformity, but as Unitarians, they were compelled, in this instance, to *violate* their dearest opinions, and strongest religious feelings. *The moral responsibility rested, no doubt, on the Legislature which occasioned the offence*, but surely they ought to attempt to throw off the burden."

Little needs be said to show the fallacy of such a position. It is but one remove from the protesting-conforming, aye—no principle of the Free-thinking Christians; and almost every thing that has been said in the one case, might be repeated in the other.

No doubt, there *is* a case, but, perhaps, *only* one, where moral responsibility rests solely upon the individual employing compulsion, to force another to do what is wrong; when the object of that compulsion is a child, an idiot, or a lunatic; not capable of distinguishing between right and wrong; not a conscious moral agent, and therefore, not an accountable being. But

where both parties have arrived at an age, when right and wrong may be distinguished; where both parties are conscious moral agents, and accountable beings,—the guilt of the wrong action rests upon both; upon the one certainly more than the other, but still are they both guilty; the man who compels to the wrong action, and the man who consciously suffers himself to be compelled.

The above principle, then, of the transfer of moral responsibility, (*) is a mere delusion. It will not and cannot bear the speaker out, in the case in question; and those who thus apply it, as a salvo of conscience, apply it in vain. They are guilty—they are self-condemned, when they conform to a ceremony, which, they say, is "against their principles and consciences."

"The moral responsibility of a *violation* of our *dearest* opinions, and *strongest* religious feelings, resting, *no doubt*," upon those who compel such a violation, and not upon those who suffer themselves, *knowingly*, to be so compelled! Then, all the martyrs that ever shed their blood, in the cause of truth and righteousness, sacrificed themselves foolishly, and in vain. They had only to "violate their dearest opinion, and strongest religious feelings," and bow down to idols of gold, and silver, and wood, and stone, and human deities, created by human beings; and "the moral responsibility" would have "rested, *no doubt*," upon their unfeeling and cruel persecutors, who had compelled them to act in such a manner. Had such a principle been invariably acted upon, the name of martyr would never have been known, nonconformity would never have been heard of, dissent would never have taken place. Right would have bowed obsequiously to might. The will would only have been uttered, and the power only shewn, and "passive obedience and non-resistance," would have been the watch-word of the day.

It would seem, as if this ill-fated subject, of Unitarian conformity to a Trinitarian ceremony, were doomed to be environed with delusion, by its advocates and defenders. The most rational touch it, and their reason is gone. And no wonder.

(*) What do Unitarians think of this principle in the doctrine of imputed righteousness.

For what can be more bewildering than the proposition, that what is a violation of the conscience, is no violation of the conscience, at the same time that it is a violation of the conscience? What mind but must turn giddy, and lose itself in inextricable mazes, by attempting a solution so utterly impossible?

The fact is, the present position of Unitarians on this subject, is a complete anomaly. Never did any set of men appear to so little advantage; never did any display greater inconsistency, argue more weakly, or resort to expedients more puerile and humiliating. "If they were blind, they would have no sin: but now they say, we see; therefore their sin remaineth." They condemn the Marriage Ceremony, as a violation of their consciences; yet they continue to conform to it, and are self-condemned. They acknowledge only Christ as their master in religion; and yet they submit that earthly governors and priestly lords shall impose upon them the observance of a religious ceremony. They exclaim against the Trinity as a ridiculous superstition, a palpable absurdity, and a gross corruption of christianity; and yet they bend the knee in a service which is confessedly Trinitarian. They are jealous of the honor of the one only true God, and shrink from idolatry as a heinous crime; and yet they bow down in the worship of a being whom they believe to be a man, "made in all things like unto his brethren"—like unto themselves. A service, they complain, violates their religious principles; and yet it is affirmed, that this service is purely civil. A service is affirmed to be purely civil; and yet it contains direct addresses to three distinct objects of worship. At one time, protesting against a wrong action, cancels the guilt. At another, the guilt is not cancelled, but transferred. Now, the conscience is free from all moral responsibility. Then, there is a "burden" resting upon it, which must be "thrown off:" that is, the conscience is burdened, without any burden; and the burden must be thrown off, which is not on.

Such are the contradictions and absurdities in which men involve themselves, when they turn aside from the straight forward path of duty and uprightness, and tamper with conscience.

I may be told, "we *must* conform to the ceremony,—it is the

law, it is the *law*?" And who, I ask, *made* the law?—God, or men? And is the law of men, to supersede the law of God? "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto men, more than unto God, judge ye." When human laws and divine laws clash with each other, there cannot be a doubt, what is the duty of every upright conscientious man. We may regret the necessity of the case, and wish it were otherwise; but we must exclaim with the apostles, Acts v. 29, "We ought to obey God rather than men." And for once, we shall be sanctioned in this by *a Bishop*—the late Bishop of Chester, now Bishop of Bath and Wells. In the discussion on the Unitarians' Marriage Bill, in the House of Lords, April 2nd, 1824, his Lordship said, that "the intercourse between the creature and the Creator ought to be free as air, for this plain reason, that *we were bound to obey God rather than man*." Monthly Repository, O. S. Vol. xix. p. 244.

Either say, then, that the Marriage Ceremony does *not* violate the consciences of Unitarians, or that Unitarian conformity to it is sinful in the sight of God. If the former, trouble not the legislature with petitioning for relief, where no relief is wanted. But if the latter, let the *single* in the Unitarian Community, be resolved to perform their duty at all events, and "obey God rather than men." The cause rests with *them*. It is they that must make a stand against the timid, worldly, and sinful conformity. It is they that must present an example to posterity, worthy of the servants of the one living and true God. Let them be willing to suffer any inconvenience, to brave any persecution, to go to any distant part, where bigotry and intolerance will not erect their barriers between them and lawful matrimony; but let them be determined, not to bow down to the Gods that earthly governors set up. And thus acting conscientiously and fearlessly, let them "commit themselves to Him that judgeth righteously." For "if God be for them, who can be against them!"

I have now, Mr. Editor, discharged what I felt to be an incumbent, though painful, duty; that of bearing my testimony against the inconsistent and sinful conduct of Unitarians in bowing down to human authority, and "violating their dearest opinions, and strongest religious feelings." The result I leave to God.

And whether I shall receive praise or censure, for the part which I have thus taken, I shall always feel happy from the conviction, that I have acted from pure conscientious motives.

I have no right, it is true, to presume upon your inserting my communication. That, of course, must be left to your editorial judgment. But whatever may be your decision, I shall at all events have done my duty, and shall be happy.

A UNITARIAN CONVERT.

P. S. Since writing the above, I perceive the Free-thinking Christians have been again protesting and conforming. In the particular instance to which I allude, the ceremony is thus characterized:—It is "an oppressive and wicked law"—it is "an act of compulsive conformity with the Church of England"—"it is part and parcel of the ritual of a church whose claims are unscriptural, whose foundation is not of God, whose authority is human, whose existence is dependent on the state"—it is "a popish rite—its origin is the popish mass book"—it was "rendered compulsory by a corrupt pontiff"—it was "by him raised to a sacrament, together with transubstantiation and auricular confession—its forms are superstitious—its assertions false"—it is "an act of public social prayer"—its "worship is Heathen"—it is "addressed to a plurality of Gods, each of whom is separately invoked"—it is "a Trinity of Gods"—it is a "palpable corruption of divine truth"—it "is idolatrous, the language of prayer being addressed to the Man Jesus, the Son of Man"—it is "an image of Pagan idolatry!"

Enough surely to convince any Unitarian in his senses, of the criminality and degradation of conformity to a ceremony of such a character.

The protesters, speaking of the doctrine of the ceremony, say, "which not all the riches or honors it may dispense, or the terrors it may assume, can induce them to do homage to. And should this their testimony, against the same expose them to the fiery furnace of persecution, they will exclaim with some of old, "our God whom we serve is able to deliver us; but if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy Gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

If the parties had presented a protest against the ceremony, to the legal officer in this case, the Clergyman, taking care that it should be made public, and afterwards had gone to Scotland to be married,—they would have acted nobly, and would have deserved praise. But protesting in this high tone, and then bowing down in passive conformity,—what folly! What vain boasting, and temporizing submission! What a burlesque on the conduct of the three eminent Hebrews alluded to on the occa-

sion! Did they protest and conform? Did they say, "we will not worship the golden image," and at the same time bend the knee to it? The fact is, the conduct of the Free-thinking Christians, is as opposed to that of these illustrious characters, as darkness is to light. So easily do mortals deceive themselves! and so apt are they to feel exultation, where the more proper sentiment would be that of shame!

The protest will be found in the Christian Reformer, for Feb. pp. 86—90. And the Editor is the Eulogist of these farcical exhibitions. It would have been more consistent with the title of his work, *Reformer*, to have endeavoured to explode the delusion in which they originate. Yet he says, "he can see neither wit in the ridicule, nor justice in the censure" of these instances of protesting-conformity. Then is he prepared to show, that such a principle is consistent with rationality, and founded in truth? And can he prove, that it is in unison with the example of the prophets, Jesus Christ, and his Apostles? If so, he can accomplish, what in my opinion, are absolute impossibilities. He says, moreover, that it is "the completest protest given in." It is certainly the completest specimen of delusion, in this way, that has yet been played off.—He says, further, that the Free-thinking Christians are "fighting the battle for the Unitarians." It would be more manly, I think, in Unitarians to fight their own battle; and not to push others into danger, which they themselves, apparently, have not the courage to face.—The Editor, however, makes two important admissions, for which the consistent among the Unitarians will thank him. He says, conscience is above all other considerations. Not, one would suppose, with Unitarians generally. Else, why do they prostitute their consciences, by bowing down in this "Heathen, Pagan, Idolatrous" ceremony? He says, lastly, that "the legal marriage ceremony imposes a disgraceful yoke upon the consciences" of Unitarians. Then is it not disgraceful in Unitarians to submit to it? and when they do submit, are they not self-disgraced?

Should I be thought to have manifested too much warmth on this subject, my answer is, that delusion is not to be banished by speaking smooth things, and prophesying deceits. And I hesitate not to say, that Unitarians, generally, on this point, not only labour under delusion, but gross delusion too. If not, let some one who thinks so, endeavour to invalidate my arguments. But I must tell him, as a preliminary condition, that he must throw out of the case all worldly considerations, and all ideas of expediency; and argue the point as a question of right and wrong, and only as such. Let him do this, and refute me,—and I will retract and be humble, and will thank him besides. But not a word about what man says, or what man will think, or what man will do; but what is duty—what is right in the sight of God?

A. U. C.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR

To the strictures of your correspondent *A Unitarian Convert*, upon my objections to his remarks on the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "lead us not into temptation"—I rejoin briefly,

1. That your correspondent endeavors to evade the objections advanced against his exposition of the clause in question, by the assertion, that "he stated nothing positively." This is a poor subterfuge, for he terms his statement, a *Reply to* TYRO: but in truth it is a reply which halts so lamentably, that he scruples not to abandon it to its fate, deserts all his positions, excepting one left in the care of "Wakefield, and his name is itself a host," and evidently happy that his retreat is covered by such a renowned chieftain, he forgets his auxiliaries the Cottage Bible, and my lord Clagget—assumes fresh ground, fortifies himself with fresh argument, and bestows not the least notice, on objections, he has so adroitly eluded.

2. The jejuneness of the succeeding piteous plaints by A U. C. must provoke a smile. He affords another instance of the fact, that Theorists are often roused to unseemly wrath by simply subjecting their conjectures to examination, and that their anger rises in exact proportion to the clearness with which is demonstrated the weakness of their airy edifices.

3. We must neither apply to the "divine perfections," nor to the "tenor of the sacred scriptures," for materials wherewith to supply an ellipsis. We must be attentive to the consistency of the phraseology, and the principles of grammar.

4. I cannot discern the point of the exquisite objection to my division of the Lord's Prayer. That prayer is undoubtedly petitionary;—but has A U. C. yet to learn, that the language of petition is not incompatible with that of adoration, intercession or glorification?

5. The important discovery is announced "that there is a difference between *leading* into, and being the *author* of temptation." Allowed. But if a Father leads his Son into scenes of temptation, he is to that Son the author of it, as far as the Son is concerned. Again; if temptation is wisely constituted to exercise our good principles, and strengthen our virtues,—by praying to be delivered from it, we are praying to be delivered from a positive good; from that which would preserve us from evil hereafter, and perfect our virtue. "If the clause therefore be thus explained" it will be necessary for us to qualify our devotions by also praying to be denied what is improper however earnestly we may ask for it.

6. Your correspondent has thought fit to go at once into an enquiry as to the origin of evil. If he did this to divert the attention from the point at issue, he will be disappointed; I leave

him in the cloud of dust he has raised. It is immaterial who is the originator of the temptation;(*) the conclusion is equally immaterial, that "temptation does not necessarily originate with him who leads into it." We pray, "lead us not into temptation," addressing God as an active being, whilst James expressly states, that God tempteth no man.

7. I do not see how the justice of God is irreconcilable with his permitting the existence of temptation, or of leading into temptation. If this world is indeed a probationary state, trials difficulties, and temptations, must be the purifying elements, which will fit us for another. Here is no difficulty, but A U. C. raising a man of straw to combat with, knocks him down with the assertion, that "God does not lead us into temptation in an evil sense." The question is, does he lead us into temptation at all? If he does not, why deprecate his interference when it is not exercised? if he does, the apostle James loses all claim to inspiration.

8. If A U. C. is serious in asserting that God does not tempt men in an evil sense, he must have forgotten the temptation of Job, (which yet he has previously cited) "when God permitted Satan to try him with losses and disease." Unless indeed, losses, privations, and personal sufferings, are not to be understood in an evil sense. If not, may we ask, in what sense they are to be taken?

9. I readily admit that the "words of Christ should mutually explain and illustrate each other." If the disciples prayed to God, that they might not enter into temptation were they not praying that God would keep them from it? And Christ prays for them, that God should keep them from the evil. But there is no parallel between these, and the clause of the Lord's prayer. There is an essential difference between *leading into* and *keeping from*. The one is the antipodes of the other.

10. That temptation is used by James in "two different senses" is a gratuitous assumption, which A U. C. puts forth to extricate himself from the difficulty, as Alexander unravelled the Gordian Knot. Read James, i. 12 and 13 verses, and whether temptation is used here by the apostle in two senses, "I leave to the candid and impartial to judge."

11. Your correspondent clings to the happy substitution of *trial* for *temptation*. I am not convinced by his reasoning, nor very willing to bow down to great names. But if trial and temptation are indeed synonymous, pray what has A U. C. been here attempting to prove? if they have the same identical meaning, what becomes of his arguments?

(*) God is omnipotent, yet he permits the existence of evil, consequently of temptation. We must therefore conclude that it accords with his designs as to the situation of man, and therefore whether he is, or is not the author of it, is of no moment in this inquiry.

12, and lastly. As I neither attempted nor pledged myself to undertake a solution of the difficulty. I freely leave it to those who with more willing minds, are aided by superior talents and knowledge. I had no idea that the objections I advanced against the solution of A U. C., would be considered sufficiently important to deserve a reply. That reply I notice more from the taunts it opens with, than the arguments which it contains; but I have neither time nor inclination to bestow further attention on this trite subject, which probably all your readers excepting A U. C. will join with me in considering excessively tedious.

Y.

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

As an application is intended to be immediately made to the Legislature, by the great body of Protestant Dissenters, for the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the following information respecting the laws which affect their rights and privileges may not be unacceptable. The Test Act, which was not originally intended to affect Protestant Dissenters, has been made to press heavily upon them for a long series of years; the following are its enactments.

The *Test Act* is entitled, *an act to prevent dangers which happen from popish recusants.* It requires, "that all persons bearing any office of trust or profit, shall take the oaths of supremacy and allegiance in public and open court, and shall also receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, according to the usage of the church of England, in some parish church, on some Lord's day, immediately after divine service and sermon, and deliver a certificate of having so received the sacrament, under the hands of the respective minsters and churchwardens, proved by two credible witnesses upon oath, and upon record in court. And that all persons taking the said oaths of supremacy and allegiance shall likewise make and subscribe this following declaration, *I* A. B. *do declare, that I believe there is no transubstantiation in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, or in the elements of bread and wine, at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever.* The penalty of breaking through this act, is a disability of suing in any court of law, or equity, being guardian of any child, executor or administrator to any person, or of taking any legacy, or deed of gift, or of bearing any public office; besides a fine of five hundred pounds."

During the reign of Charles II, several Acts passed the Legislature, against the Liberty of the Dissenters, the following are the principal.

An act for well governing and regulating corporations, 13 Car. II. ch. i. Whereby all who bear office in any city, corporation, town, or borough, are required to take the oaths and subscribe the declaration therein mentioned, and *to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper acording to the rites of the church of England.* This effectually turned the dissenters out of the government of all corporations.

The act of uniformity, 14 Car. II. ch. 4. Whereby all parsons, vicars, and ministers, who enjoyed any preferment in the church, were obliged to declare their unfeigned *assent and consent* to every thing contained in the book of *common prayer*, &c. or be *ipso facto* deprived: and all *school masters and tutors* are prohibited from teaching youth without licence from the archbishop or bishop, under pain of three months imprisoment.

An act to prevent and suppress seditious conventicles, 16 Car. II. ch. 4. Whereby it is declared unlawful to be present at any meeting for religious worship, except according to the usage of the church of England, where five besides the family should be assembled; in which case the first and second offences are made subject to a certain fine or three months imprisonment, on conviction before a justice of peace on the oath of a single witness; and the third offence, on conviction at the sessions, or before the justices of assize, is punishable by *transportation for seven years.*

An act for restraining non-conformists from inhabiting in corporations, 17 Car. II. ch. 2. Whereby all dissenting ministers, who would not take an oath therein specified against the lawfulness of taking up arms against the king on any pretence whatsoever, and that they would never attempt any alteration of government in church and state; are banished five miles from all corporation towns, and subject to a fine of forty pounds, in case they should preach in any conventicle.

Another act to prevent and suppress seditious conventicles 22 Car. II. ch. 5. Whereby any persons who teach in such conventicles, are subject to a penalty of twenty pounds for the first, and forty pounds for every subsequent offence; and any person who permits such a conventicle to be held in their house, is liable to a fine of twenty pounds; and justices of peace are empowered to break open doors where they are informed such conventicles are held, and take the offenders into custody.

These Acts, excepting the Test and Corporation Acts, have been repealed by the 19 and 52 Geo. III.

By 19 Geo. III. the following declaration is substituted for the subscription to the 39 Articles; to which Dissenting Ministers were subjected.

"I *A. B.* do solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I am a Christian and a Protestant, and as such, that I believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as

commonly received among Protestant churches, are the word of God; and that I do receive the same as the rule of my faith and practice." Every person signing such declaration, and taken the oaths usually required, shall be, and is hereby declared to be entitled to all the exemptions, benefits, privileges and advantages of the Act of Toleration passed in the reign of W. and M.

The following are some of the provisions of the Act of 52 Geo. III. c. 155, which may now be called the Toleration Act.

The Places of Worship must be certified and registered, either in the court of the bishop of the diocese, with the archdeacon of the diocese, or the justices of the peace at the General or Quarter Sessions for the County or City. Any person may deliver in a certificate of a place being appointed for religious worship. The registrar is bound to give a certificate, for which he can demand two shillings and sixpence only.

Every house open for religious worship where there are twenty persons, besides the family, must he registered, under a penalty of not less than twenty shillings, nor more than twenty pounds at the discretion of the justices convicting. The doors of such place must not be bolted or barred under a penalty of not less than forty shillings nor more than twenty pounds. Any person disturbing a congregation in a registered place of worship, whether outside or inside such place, shall on conviction thereof at a quarter sessions, forfeit to the king forty pounds. And on conviction of several defendants for one such offence, *each* is liable to the whole penalty.

We shall probably return to this subject in a future number, in the mean time we recommend to the attention of our readers a work, entitled, "A Sketch of the History and Proceedings of the Deputies appointed to protect the Civil Rights of Protestant Dissenters, &c. London, 1814.

INTELLIGENCE.

ANNUAL MEETINGS, &c.

THE fifth anniversary of the Unitarian Congregation, assembling in the Meeting-House, Moor Lane, Bolton, will be held on Easter Sunday and Monday, April 15 and 16. The Rev. Hugh Hutton, of Birmingham will preach on the occasion. The friends will dine together, on the Monday, in the Cloth Hall as usual, and the Rev. William Shepherd, of Gateacre, (Liverpool,) is expected to take the chair.

Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society.

The Annual Meeting of this Society will be held in the Unita-

rian Chapel, Mosley Street, Manchester, on Good Friday next, April 13th.—The Rev. J. R. Beard, of Salford, will preach on the occasion. The service will commence at eleven o'clock.

In the Afternoon, a Meeting will be held for the discharge of business, in the School Room of the above-named Chapel. The Rev. J. J. Tayler will preside. The chair to be taken at three o'clock.

Somerset, Gloucester, and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association.

The fifth half yearly general Meeting of this Association will be held at Marshfield, on Friday April 13th, (the day commonly called Good Friday,) when the Rev. Robert Cree, of Preston, is expected to preach. Service to commence at eleven o'clock.

REMOVAL &c. OF MINISTERS.

The Rev. John Cooper, of Nantwich, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Unitarian Congregation at Cosely, to become their pastor, to which situation he has removed.

The Rev. John Hincks has been invited by the Unitarian Congregation at the Chapel Toxteth Park, Liverpool, to become their minister, as colleague with the Rev. Hugh Anderson.

Obituary.

DIED on Monday, March 12th, Aged, 46, Elizabeth, wife of Mr. Jabez Dunsford, Surgeons' Instrument maker, Liverpool. Mrs. D. passed through a series of trial and suffering of a very severe and painful kind; to which she submitted with the greatest patience, composure, and resignation to the will of her heavenly Father. Her conduct through years of affliction spoke more forcibly than language could have done, the effect of those christian principles she had cherished.

POETRY.

DEATH.

DREAD Death! thou unseen monarch of this globe,
Whose arm is stronger than a hundred storms,
What mortal tongue can sing thy giant power?
What art thou, Death? Where is thy secret cell?
Say art thou wrapp'd within impervious clouds,
Or whelm'd in dark oblivion's murky cave;
Where tempests fraught with horror guard the mouth,

And swift-winged demons wait thy dooming nod?
Hast thou yet power, remorseless king of kings,
For countless years yet nurs'd by hoary time,
To blanch the empires of thy subject world,
To mow down nations with thy dreadful scythe,
And wither myriads with thy awful name?
Canst thou not fill the tomb's ungorg'd abyss,
And quench its thirsty flame with seas of blood,
That thou may'st dash to earth thy iron rod,
Nor longer reign the terror of a world?
Ah no! vain hope!—unnumber'd millions have,
And millions more for ages yet to come,
Will groan beneath the grasp of ruthless Death;
His arm, like ocean's, shall encircle earth,
His sight appal it, and his carnage waste,
Till time's vast empire ceases to exist.
How shall we paint thy power, terrific Death?
Shall we from Time's profound, with irksome toil,
Dig up the mouldering roll of ancient fate,
And sing primordial nations, hurl'd by thee,
Remorseless tyrant! to sepulchral gloom?
Why so? his pale-hors'd car, as swift as winds,
Still flies thro' earth, and floats on gory waves,
While he with strength unbending shoots around
His lightning-shafts, each tipp'd with death and woe.
Oft have we seen, at night's tomb-silent noon,
Ten thousand stars unclouded splendor shed,
Whose gently-waving flames burnt fierce and bright,
As tho' their reign of glory had no end;
Yet when the sun emerg'd from ocean's bed,
And shower'd o'er heaven resistless floods of light,
Behold them dimm'd; and not a trace remains
Of all the grandeur and the starry glow.
Again the night succeeds, and thousands more
Illume the azure vault with living flame;
Again th' ethereal king remounts his car
And drives the fading host to unseen caves.
'Tis thus with man. Oft have we seen at morn
Myriads elate with energy and life,
Awake, unconscious of approaching end;
Yet, ere the sun has gain'd meridian height,
Stretch'd pale and lifeless on the couch of death.
Again a myriad more, their stations take,
(Begirt with power and rich with heaps of gold,)
Again the blast of Death sweeps off the throng,
And leaves no vestige of their name behind.
Thus ages roll; but mortals ne'er improve
From lessons num'rous as the ocean's sands;
But dream of halcyon years they've yet to see,
From the most humble to the ruling train,
The swarthy slave that groans beneath the lash,
Build's mighty hopes on vision's shadowing base;
He darts on future times a hopeful glance,
Sees freedom, like a giant, stalk thro' earth,
With stride enormous, and with rapid step,
To scatter blessings with a hundred hands;
Nor thinks of aught to bar his heart's desire,
Till death entombs him with his empty hopes.
The purpled monarch and the potent lord,
Big with the swelling thoughts of kingly power,

And drunk with ceaseless draughts from flattery's cup;
Think they of storms to ruffle pleasure's calm,
Billows to shake the rock-built throne of power,
Or winds to strew their glories and their pomp?
Ah, no! infatuated mortals! they
Dream not of aught to end the magic charm,
But pant to gain the goal of their desire,
The giddy heights of fortune and of fame.
Mark the proud conqueror crown'd with glorious wreath,
Still climbing up ambition's rugged steep;
He chains his look upon the dazzling meed,
Already grasps it with an outstretch'd arm,
When, lo! Death's poisonous darts, around him hurl'd,
Pierce to his heart and drink the vital tide;
For Death with "equal eye" scans all the globe,
He blasts the peasant and the sceptred king,
He roams o'er Afric's torrid plains of sand,
And tramples on the shores of polar seas.
Mark ye his bloody track, where yonder towers
From Stamboul's wide-spread city rise on high;
There from the cloudy chambers of his might,
When sable-winged night with silence reigns,
He scatters pestilence from off his robe.
Now midnight groans, and ever rolling cries,
Heart-piercing shrieks, and shouts of wild despair,
Commingled, roll incessantly to heav'n,
While universal grief enfeebles all.
There widows, frantic for their husbands' death,
Innum'rous mothers, robb'd of blooming youths,
Children, made orphans in a single hour,
Pall'd in funeral robes, the city crow'd,
To sink those pallid victims in the tomb,
Whose smiles so late pour'd joy and gladness round.
Yet, as tho' feeble were the arm of Death,
His might too puny, and his havoc small,
We see the madden'd nations rush to war,
And rank their thousands in his slaughtering lists;
They tear the sword of carnage from his hand,
And drench it to the hilt in streams of blood.
Mark ye, o'er yonder war-encumber'd plains,
The grim fiend bending with unbounded joy
To drink the thund'rous music of the fray,
And laugh at man, amid inglorious strife,
Spread ruin o'er the plain with ceaseless toil,
And heap up piles of dead to fill the tomb.
Why then does man assist the gory king?
He is not weak. Has he not boist'rous winds
To lash the sleeping oceans into storm,
And whelm the roaming sailor in the deeps?
Has he not earthquakes, that engulph the earth,
And tomb vast cities in an unknown grave?
Has he not fire-wing'd lightnings, thrown with wrath,
Famine, and fire, plagues to ravage earth?
Why then assist him? Does frail man court death?
Ah, no! he shrinks with terror at the thought,
Yet wars against himself, and aids his foe;
For numbers sail upon the sea of vice,
Lull'd by the magic of the circling scene,
And hang with rapture on the pleasing thought
Of never-ending and transcendant bliss.

But mark their end? they meet their due reward.
Launch'd on the sea of vice, in fragile bark,
They sail secure while whispering zephyrs breathe;
But soon wild tempests gather round their heads,
And hurl them fiercely onward to their doom!
That doom they see approach with deep despair,
They see the boiling whirlpool stretch before,
Death on its front, wide-yawning for the prey.
Aghast they stand, strain ev'ry nerve to shun
The horrid grave, and gain fair virtue's shore;
But winds resistless mock their puny strength,
And quick th' insatiate whirlpool sucks them down.
Are then, O Death! thy terrors as thy pow'r
Without a bound to circumscribe them here?
Is there no mind unshackled by thy dread?
No mortal that can smile beneath thy sting?
Yes, mark yon dying christian on his couch,
His bitter pangs can scarce extort a groan;
He faintly smiles upon the weeping train
Which stands in sacred silence round his bed,
And gently chides them for their mournful grief.
See how he casts a lingering glance around,
And spies his grief-worn wife, with tear-fill'd eye,
Bend o'er his couch with look serenely mild,
And pray for heav'n to grant him longer life.
"Weep not for me," the placid christians says,
"Weep not at death; why should we mourn the hour
In which we bid adieu to woe and pain?
This earth's a dungeon, in thick darkness cloth'd,
Hung round with horrors, and beset with thorns,
Thro' which we roam in wildly-devious paths,
Till death unbars the iron gates, to free
Our troubled souls from bondage and from chains.
Then loos'd from fetters we shall mount sublime
To happier realms, to seats beyond the skies,
There we shall meet with everlasting spring,
A crown immortal, and unfading bliss;
Gaze with heart-thrilling rapture on our God,
And drink unenvied pleasures from his smiles."
For that celestial bliss the christian leaves
The dearest ties which bind him to this earth,
He looks with scorn upon the airy shapes,
The withering riches and the transient joys,
Which, with unbending ardor, man pursues.
Now as the spirit wings itself for flight,
He bids each mourning friend a last farewell,
And calmly sinks into the sleep of death,—
That when the thunder of the heav'ns shall rouse
A slumb'ring universe to life and light,
He may commingle with the saints of God,
Tow'r o'er the earth, and tread yon starry skies,
Where he shall join th' angelic choirs who sing
In dulcet strains, eternal songs of praise,
Songs which shall roll like incense to the throne
Of him who rules the heav'ns—the mighty God of Gods.

T. G.

*** *For the Correspondence see the Cover.*

F. B. Wright, Printer, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 29. NEW SERIES *Price 4½d.* MAY, 1, 1827

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

From Bellamy's Bible.

JUDGES XII. 6.

Say now Shibboleth and he said Sibboleth for he could not frame to pronounce it right. This passage has not escaped from the remarks of skeptics, who have endeavoured to show the absurdity of supposing that a whole tribe, even the twelfth part of the nation, could not pronounce the word *Shibboleth;* but instead thereof, said *Sibboleth.* I acknowledge it does appear a little strange; nor have I met with any commentator who has accounted for this defect in the pronunciation of the same word by the same people—residing among, and also having constant communication with each other—speaking the same language—professing the same religion—meeting in the same tabernacles—performing the same rites and ceremonies—and having the same manners, usages and customs among them. If, however, we attend to the history, we may find a reason for this singularity in this tribe. It will be remembered that Joseph resided in Egypt, and married a native Egyptian, by whom he had Ephraim, the head, or father of the Ephraimites, and that on account of his having been brought up in his native land, with the vernacular pronunciation of the people of Egypt, who pronouncing the Hebrew letter ש *shin, sh,* with the Coptic pronunciation as C *sima*—they could not pronounce the letter *shin,* i. e. *sh:* therefore all the Ephraimites having received their pronunciation in infancy from their progenitors the Egyptians could not *frame to pronounce* the letter ש

shin, as *sh*: in שבלת *shibboleth*, but סבלת *sibboleth* with a ס *samech*, or the *s*.

But it may be asked, why did not the other tribes who were in Egypt after Joseph pronounce the ש *shin*, as a ס *samech* or *s*, as the tribe of Ephraim did? In answer, it must be recollected, that Ephraim was the son of a native Egyptian, and naturally acquired the pronunciation of the letter ש *shin*, in infancy, as a ס *samech*, or *s*, when the oral muscles were pliant and formative; but when the Hebrews went into Egypt before the death of Joseph, their pronunciation was perfectly Hebrew, as they had received the pronunciation of the letter from the Chaldeans, by Abraham, who came into the land of Canaan from Ur of the Chaldees. This defect in the pronunciation of the letter ש *shin* as *sh*, was therefore communicated to the descendants of Ephraim, who living and marrying in their own tribe only, the pronunciation of the letter ש *shin* as a ס *samech* or *s*, was of necessity retained in that tribe at the time of the Judges, by which all the Ephraimites who attempted to cross the Jordan were detected.

But some may suppose that the Egyptians did pronounce the letter ש *shin*, as *sh* because the letter ס *samech*, is not used in the passages where the conversation is between Moses and the Egyptians: but this argument would be of no force, as those conversations between Moses and the Egyptians were written by the sacred writer agreeably to the Hebrew.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

It is deeply to be lamented, that in this enlightened age and country, so little attention is paid to the principles of dissent. And it is not too much to say, that were Unitarians to imitate the conduct of other denominations of Dissenters, nonconformity might soon become extinct, and the religion of Christ a mere state engine, to keep the multitude in awe, and aggrandize a proud and worldly hierarchy. Indeed many nominal Unitarians are not altogether free from a hankering after church principles, because the church has many of the good things of this world to bestow. In their hearts, they disapprove of the Establishment;

but rather than appear singular, and endure the senseless ridicule of the fashionable, they are not unfrequently found offering up prayers in the temple of a triune Deity, and making an outward mockery of that faith for which their forefathers suffered privations and persecutions. Even in our churches, the daughter of the lady of Rome, is endeavouring to gain a firm footing. The "beggarly elements" of gowns and ordinations are becoming the credentials of a christian minister; and the glorious spirit of nonconformity may soon be spurned at by our young *divines*, as an antiquated and impertinent intruder.

Under these circumstances, it may be well to call the attention of Unitarians to the tenets and absurdities of the book of Common Prayer;--tenets and absurdities which have so long corrupted the religion of Jesus, and checked its influence upon the hearts and minds of our fellow creatures. In fact, christianity can never convert the infidel, and regenerate a sinful world, so long as it is identified with the gross errors and corruptions of Church-of-Englandism; and therefore, it becomes every friend of human nature; to expose a system which was founded by despotism, and is supported by interest and bigotry.

To contribute, in some measure, to this end, is the object hoped to be answered by the following

COMMENTARIES.

The Order for Morning Prayer.

"Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places, &c."

This address to the people, and many of the prayers in the liturgy, are beautiful and devotional; and probably not excelled by any compositions whatever, excepting the Sacred Scriptures. This, however, is no reason that they should be *forced* upon the clergy, or the people.

The Absolution or Remission of Sins.

"Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he would turn from his wickedness and live; and hath given power and commandment to his ministers, to declare and pronounce to his peo-

ple, being penitent, the *absolution* and remission of their sins, &c."

These words declare, that ministers of the gospel have a divine authority to absolve sins, which is certainly not given to any mortal in the present day. And it is a high presumption in any man, to pronounce to another, "thy sins are forgiven thee."

Church people are very loud in exclaiming against the doctrine of *absolution* in the church of Rome; when at the same time it is repeated to them in their own services every Sunday morning. Oh, how ready are we to "take out the mote out of our brother's eye, when, behold, a beam is in our own eye!"

Here all standing up, the Priest shall say,

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost."

Here, as in a number of other passages in the Common Prayer Book, glory is given to "the man Christ Jesus, in express opposition to the words of Jehovah, who has solemnly declared by the mouth of his Prophet, "I will not give my glory to another;" and to the words of Jesus Christ, who has said, "In that day ye shall ask me nothing."

Then shall he read distinctly with an audible voice, the first lesson, taken out of the Old Testament, as is appointed in the Calendar.

In the Church service *all* the scriptural lessons are *fixed.* Such a selection is exceedingly injurious. The minister is prevented from reading numerous other portions of scripture, which might edify and comfort his flock. Instead of a rich variety, there is continual repetition. As the selections must necessarily be scanty, only a very limited knowledge of the Scriptures can thus be acquired. And as people are but too apt to neglect the Scriptures in private, this may be one reason why the members of the Establishment are so little acquainted with the sacred writings. It is in fact a narrowing system, and tends to contract the mind, and confirm prejudices.

To thee Cherubim and Seraphim, continually do cry.

What foundation is there for the popular opinion, which this sentence countenances? viz. that certain beings are standing before the throne of God, constantly singing psalms and hymns. Perhaps most of the erroneous notions which many Christians have formed of heaven, and the employment of the blessed in heaven, have arisen from a too literal interpretatiou of the book of Revelation. Cherubim were winged figures that covered the sacred ark, in the Holy of Holies; and Seraphim were figures that Isaiah saw in his vision, &c. There will doubtless be some employment hereafter better suited to rational creatures, than continual singing. But in fact, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." We may, however, rest well assured, that "in the presence of God there will be fulness of joy, at his right hand pleasures for evermore."

Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

These words are a contradiction in terms. "Son" (says Dr. Adam Clarke) "supposes time, generation and father; and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms, *son* and *eternity*, is absolutely im possible, as they imply essentially different and *opposite* ideas."

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants: whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

A being is here *prayed* to who is admitted to have *bled.* Can *God* bleed? If then to worship a *creature* of God be idolatry, to worship "the man Christ Jesus," incurs this heavy charge. And even Trinitarians admit, that if the Trinity be unscriptural, Trinitarians are idolaters.

Then shall be sung or said the Apostles' Creed, &c. "I believe in God the Father Almighty," &c.

This creed would naturally call forth many remarks; few, however, will be sufficient to shew its objectional nature, as a whole.

First; it is quite out of place, for any man to repeat his belief in certain tenets at a time when he is engaged in prayer; and especially to repeat this belief two or three times in one service.

Secondly; it is not to be expected that every individual who joins in this creed can believe all the tenets it contains; and if so, it must make hypocrites of many worshippers, or keep them from divine service.

Thirdly; who is it that requires us to make profession of the tenets of this creed? Why, persons who have no authority in matters of faith, but what they assume in defiance of the scriptures, and the authority of Jesus Christ. It is said, indeed, that this creed is the apostles'; but if so, why is it not found in the New Testament? why is it not expressly stated by Peter, James, John, or Paul? Why! because it was never written by one of them, or indeed by any divinely commissioned person. Shall then certain frail mortals, who call themselves bishops, insist upon persons professing their opinions? and shall they require them to believe in tenets which are at variance with reason, and the language of scripture? No; one is our master even Christ; and we will acknowledge no authority but his, and receive no doctrines but those which he has taught us.

The creed is certainly *not* objectional in its two first articles: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth: and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord." These are consistent with the teaching of the apostles, and so far may be received as apostolical. But then, the creed goes on to say—*who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.*

It is not a little surprising, that the apostles never allude to the supposed miraculous conception. Why their silence, if this doctrine be true? But even admitted, it proves nothing of Deity; and many believe it, who at the same time believe in the strict unity of God. See, however, Mr. Grundy's Lectures, and an admirable discourse on the subject by Mr. Harris.

He Descended into Hell.

"Strange fancies" (says an ingenious writer) "have prevailed

upon this subject: the general opinion is still that Christ actually went to hell, some say to frighten the evil spirits, others to reclaim them, others to suffer the wrath of God and make full atonement, others to be the representative and substitute of the elect, in bearing for them the torments of *hell.*

This opinion was more fully expressed in the articles drawn up in the time of Edward the VI, than it is in the present articles. The Reformers obtained more light and moderation, as they pursued their inquiries, but still the *Creed,* set forth in metre at the end of the Psalms, expounds the descent to hell literally.

The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints.

"In what sense" (says the writer above quoted) "can we say that we believe in the *Catholic Church?* Is it meant only that we believe that *there is* a Catholic Church, i. e. that there are Christians in many places? This is scarcely worth making an article of faith to be professed with a loud voice and all the solemnity of devotion, every time christians meet for religious worship; but it is established, and that is enough—if it were contrary in meaning, *I believe in no Catholic Church,* but in separate, independent and territorial churches, it would be recited with as much reverence, and defended by churchmen with as much zeal and honesty. Or if it meant that by believing in the Catholic Church, we *give credit to* or *put trust in* the church which is of widest extent and most populous (which was undoubtedly the ancient and is the true interpretation?) If so, the clause cannot be sincerely repeated by any Protestant, for the Protestant Church is and always has been a minority, and the Catholic Church must be the Roman or Greek, the doctrines of which are in the estimation of all Protestants idolatrous. The Roman Church has a great advantage in usurping the name *Catholic* (though, as Milton says, *Roman Catholic* is a Pope's bull, it is the same as *particular universal;)* for the ignorant of all communities cannot help considering the Catholic Church as the Church of Catholics, i. e. believers in the Pope, and therefore to declare belief in this church is a profession of popery.

It may, however, be urged in behalf of the article, that it is repeated by the multitude without any meaning, and suggests no ideas whatever, good, bad, or indifferent!

The Lord's Prayer.

Undoubtedly it is very proper to introduce the Lord's Prayer during the time of divine service: but why it is repeated three or four times every Sunday morning is rather unaccountable. Jesus Christ has said that we are to use no vain repetitions in our prayers; but churchmen seem to think, that they should attend more to their creed-makers, than their Saviour.

A Prayer for the Clergy and People.

"Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our advocate and Mediator Jesus Christ."

He who is the "giver of every good and perfect gift," grants from his own essential goodness. "I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you;" are the words of Jesus Christ.

Besides, I wonder whether it ever occurs to churchmen, that the above language proves Christ to be a distiuct being from God? For can he who is the advocate with God, be that very being to whom he is advocating? And can the Mediator between God and men, be one of the parties between whom he mediates?

A Prayer for Saint Chrysostom.

In this prayer the saint is not once alluded to. But this same Chrysostom was a busy meddling priest of the fifth century; and the popes have dubbed him a *saint*, for advocating their usurpation. Why Protestants have imitated their example, must appear a little extraoidinary to every consistent person.

The order for the Evening Prayer.

THE SONG OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

It appears a little strange, that Protestants should sing the Son of the blessed Virgin. If those Episcopalians who inveigh so strongly against the Catholics, were to look to their own

liturgy, they might perhaps find many remains of popish superstition, which ought long since to have been expunged. Indeed, "the common prayer is little else than a translation of several parcels of the Roman Breviary, Missal and Ritual."

In my next I shall proceed to remark on the Creed supposed to have been written by St. Athanasius. This may be considered as a precious relic of past times.

PURGATOR.

On the qualifications necessary for a Christian Minister.

MR. EDITOR,

TRAVELLING the other day in a stage coach, I found myself in company with persons of very different religious persuasions. One was a Roman Catholic Priest; another a Minister of the Church of England, and the third a Dissenting Minister. The conversation turned on the qualifications necessary for a Christian Minister.

The Catholic maintained, that none could be qualified for that office, without receiving ordination from a Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church; for that church being the "pillar and ground of truth," and her bishops having been consecrated from the first, by the apostle Peter, whom Jesus had pronounced to be the rock on which his church is built, and the first Bishop of Rome, with power to ordain his successor, none could be the legitimate ministers of the christian church, who had not first been approved, and ordained by a bishop of the Roman Catholic Church, and that no one would be ordained by any bishop of that church who is not duly qualified for the office. And these qualifications are; an accurate acquaintance with the Greek and Roman Classics, and a firm belief in all the doctrines taught by the apostolic church of Rome. And that, in the exercise of his ministry he must receive and explain the scriptures in the sense in which the church had explained them, for all "private interpretations" are forbidden by an apostle.

The Church-of-England-man, admitted that there must be

authority maintained by the Church ; and an approval of those who are to exercise the ministry in the church ; that the qualifications of a candidate for the ministry must be submitted to and determined by those who have authority in the church, namely the Bishops ; but as the Church of England is a reformed church, and separated from the Church of Rome, on account of what are deemed errors in that church, she had a right to form herself into an independent community ; and as Dr. Horsley has observed, her Bishops, &c., having originally received ordination from the Bishops of Rome, the power of ordination remained with them, and they can confer on others the right to exercise the christian ministry, in virtue of the same, and therefore the chain of apostolic succession remains unbroken to the present day.

And further, he observed, we allow our ministers the right of interpreting the scriptures for themselves, which it a great privilege ; but in order that a uniformity of faith may be preserved, the church having "authority to decree rites and ceremonies, and of determining controversies of faith," has, in her wisdom, drawn up 39 articles, expressive of what is the true faith, and a book of Common Prayer which contains the essence and substance of the christian religion. To the articles of faith every young minister professes his belief *ex animo*, and assents and consents to all that is contained in the Book of Common Prayer, so that the peace of the church, and uniformity of faith are preserved in our body.

And in order that we may have a learned ministry, all our young divines are well educated, at our Universities which are regarded as the glory of our country, and no young man who is not well acquainted with the writings of Virgil, of Juvenal, of Ovid, of Horace, of Homer, and the whole range of the classic writers would not be thought qualified for the office of a *christian minister*, for in the pages of those illustrious writers learning is alone to be found, and whoever is not well acquainted with them is justly deemed unfit to teach the *christian* religion.

The Dissenting minister, who I found to be a Presbyterian, in our day called a Unitarian, said, with much good nature,

gentlemen, I differ from you respecting the establishment of religion, both in the Church of Rome and the Church of England; but I agree with you in the opinion you maintain of the necessity of a *learned* ministry. The study of the classics is absolutely necessary, and no man can be a fit or proper person to be a *christian* minister who is destitute of such knowledge. Our people are themselves learned, and it is not to be supposed they will listen to the instructions of one who they know to be inferior in point of education to themselves. Is it likely, that they should? They have read Homer and Virgil, and the other illustrious authors who were the glory of their age and country, and can it be thought, that any man can understand the scriptures, the *New Testament especially*, which was written in Greek, who has not an intimate acquaintance with those authors?

Finding these gentlemen all agreed on one point, I ventured in my turn to speak, and said:—

Gentlemen, had any of you a son who showed a predilection for the mathematics, would you send him for instruction in this branch of science to a *music master*, that he might be well qualified to fill the office of a surveyor, or to make him a proficient in astronomy? If you destined him for the mercantile life, would you employ a tutor who is a *dancing master?* If for a farmer, would you provide for him a master well skilled in *logic?* Would you not give him that kind of education which had a direct tendency to qualify him for the situation of life for which you destined him? If so, does not common sense dictate to you the kind of education necessary for a young man destined for the christian ministry? I am the friend of literature, and I rejoice in its extension in the present day.

I think with you, that we should have a learned ministry. But can that man be truly, and practically learned, who is acquainted with every subject but that which relates to his particular profession? And permit me to ask you, if it would not be better that the education of a young man destined for the christian ministry should be such as would lead him to an intimate acquaintance with, and a critical knowledge of, the sacred writings? and that study of the *profane* classics should be of

secondary consideration? What do the Heathen writers teach of the character of God? What of human duty, in comparison with what is found in the New Testament? And from whom are we to learn the doctrines of immortality and a future state? from Jesus, or from Socrates, or Homer, or even from Plato?

Instead of the study of these writings having been profitable to our young men, have they not been pernicious? Does it not require more judgement of mind, and more command over the passions, than are to be found in a youth of eighteen? Is the christian minister to teach the crude notions of the Heathen respecting the Gods and Goddesses, of fate, of revenge, of the libidinous intercourse of their Deities, or the pure doctrines of Jesus? Is it surprising that any of our young ministers should, after passing through such a course of education, renounce the faith and the name of christians? The wonder is that there are not more instances than have been found in the present day.

When I had finished, all agreed that however these things might be lamented, still my opinions, if adopted would be injurious, for none but a learned ministry would do; and there is no road to learning but in the regular and systematic order of all our colleges.

I briefly replied, I wish not to destroy either learning or the colleges, but let the whole be reformed, the end would be attained in a safer way, and be found to be more effective, so far at least as christianity and the christian ministry are concerned.

All the reply, I got was, it wo'nt do, Sir, your notions are visionary! With this I was silenced.

In the course of the evening, I was reading Dr. Taylor's valuable "Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans," in which I found the following note, and was happy that a man of so much learning, was of the same opinion as myself—I subjoin it for the consideration of your readers.

"This Enquiry into the sense of *Righteousness*, &c. may serve to shew wherein the true learning of a *Christian* and especially of a *Divine*, consists; namely, in understanding the language of the Spirit of God in the sacred writings; for

which we have all desirable advantages, and without which the knowledge of christian doctrine can never be revived. For how should we know what is the sense of the spirit, if we do not understand the language of the spirit? But the common way of education in *Christian* schools leads the mind quite out of this track of knowledge. The first years of our learning are employed chiefly in profane or heathen authors, whose language and sentiments are quite remote from those of the sacred writings, and of true religion. And then our *Academic* studies are almost wholly exercised in a spurious, fictitious learning, and in a language invented by men to explain, but which indeed serves only to obscure, *Theology;* and to draw away our thoughts from true knowledge and understanding into the pursuit of spectres and delusive shadows. *Christian* scholars should be brought up principally in *Christian* learning; or the most accurate knowledge of the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Scriptures, to which classical learning, and the study of the Ancients (which is indeed a valuable branch of literature) should be made subservient."

I am, Sir, yours,

PHILALETHES.

UNITARIANS AND DEISTS.

NO. IV.

"Some of the Unitarians are now showing their intimate relationship with the Deists, by receiving them into their churches.—So we learn from the Monthly Repository, the organ of that body."

New Baptist Magazine, August, 1826.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

W. J. says, "surely N. Jones forgets in the ardour of his zeal against unbelievers, that some of the wisest and best of christians have strenuously upheld the truth and importance of natural religion, and that Paul himself is related to have declared something much in favour of it." But he has

omitted to tell us those other things which such men as Paul, Priestley, Lindsey, Lardner, Locke, Newton, and many others maintained. They maintained that natural religion was good, but revealed religion was much better; that in the works of creation are displayed the divine perfections, but revelation alone leads our views to the contemplation of a future state, and affords us the evidences of its existence, that Jesus hath by the gospel brought life and immortality to light; and that the hope of immortality is founded on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Therefore revelation was absolutely necessary and without it W. J. would have found us just where Socrates, Aristotle and Cicero left us, and to which dark and doubtful condition, the system which W. J. has adopted, would, in my opinion, again soon reduce us. W. J. calls his train of reasoning "brief and obvious," and to his mind "abundantly cogent and satisfactory." To me it appears the reverse, and I think I am not alone in this opinion.

W. J. proceeds; "I only ask N. J. to do the unbeliever the justice, to allow, that he *may* entertain the same views of God, and duty, and futurity and with the same confidence, as the christian, though on different grounds." This is a modest request, which one could hardly tell how to refuse, were it not for the consequences which the grant would involve, namely, that the religion of nature is quite as effective, and as completely satisfactory to the mind longing after immortality, as that revelation which God hath communicated to the children of men, which was designed to afford men a ground of hope, never before possessed by the human race; and of course the mission of Jesus, with all the signal displays of divine power by which that mission was accredited and confirmed was unnecessary: and his painful death, which was the seal of the great charter of man's redemption, might have been avoided, and he was mistaken when he declared that it was necessary; see Luke xxiv. 26.

W. J. hints at the "modification of which the sentiments of the Deist are capable." He may modify deism as he pleases, and I should like to see it in all its modified forms, but I think it to be a more than Herculean task to give to deism the excellent

qualities of christianity ; as soon may the moon be made to act with all the influence of the sun as this can be effected.

W. J. congratulates himself " that there are not many in the Unitarian body, who are actuated by the same spirit as N. J." I judge no man, I trust that N. J. wrote in a spirit of sincerity ; I know not if the Unitarians as a body will thank W. J. for the compliment ; but I do sincerely believe, that they are not disposed to make a compromise of their principles, and admit that christian Unitarianism and Deism are identical, or that they are in any-wise similar ; that day I hope is not only very far distant, but will never arrive when this shall be the case.

W. J. says, N. J. " takes it for granted, that one who is a Deist, must regard christians as believers in a lie, and their honoured Lord as an enthusiast, if they do not brand him as an impostor ; such thoughts and such language I utterly disclaim." I believe W. J. is sincere in expressing himself thus, and I rejoice in such an avowal of his sentiments, it does him honor; and from my heart I should rejoice to see him disclaim a system, of which, I fear, such thoughts and such language are the legitimate offspring. W. J. shudders at such thoughts and such language ; but such thoughts have been clothed in such language. Those who doubt it, may be satisfied of the fact from the writings of Volney ; from a work entitled, " *Ecce Homo ;*" from another called " Christianity Unveiled ;" and from Palmer's " Catechism of Nature," and from many other minor productions of the present day ; in which christianity and the character of its founder are loaded with ihe foulest epithets that the vocabulary of language furnishes. It is not from the views of the subject taken by so respectable a scholar, and so amiable a man as W. J. that we can learn either the spirit or the tendency of deism, but from those who are fully embued with its principles, who have drunk deep of the waters of the Stygian lake, and who have never tasted of that stream which flows from the throne of the Eternal, the waters of which are for the healing of the nations, and for the cleansing the world from the pollution of superstition, and the stains of infidelity.

It is by carrying every system out to its ultimate and legiti-

mate tendencies, and viewing it in all its bearings and influences, that we can satisfy our minds of its importance and value; or form a just and correct opinion of the mischievous ingredients of which it is composed. I do hope that W. J. when he has calmly and seriously reviewed his present system, and compared christianity and deism together, with the effects each is calculated to have on the mind and conduct in the present state, and on the hopes and wishes of man as to futurity, he will become the advocate for that which his present system appears to have a tendency to uproot. I am encouraged to entertain this hope by the excellent work he has published on "Systematic Morality," in which are opinions that none but a christian in heart could have formed, and which would never have been conceived by a mind unacquainted with the precepts of Jesus.

In my next I shall discuss W. J.'s opinion respecting the character of Jesus.

I remain yours, &c.

JOHN RAGLAND.

INTELLIGENCE.

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY,

Of the Unitarian Christian Congregation, Moor Lane, Bolton.

On Sunday, April 15th, three sermons were preached in the Unitarian Meeting House, Moor Lane; those in the morning and evening by the Rev. HUGH HUTTON, A. M., of Birmingham; and that in the afternoon by the Rev. JOHN CROPPER, A. M., pastor of the congregation. The two collections made in the afternoon and in the evening, towards liquidating the debt upon the School-room, amounted to upwards of £20.

On Monday, the Anniversary Dinner took place in Mr. Watson's Cloth Hall, when ninety-five persons, male and female, sat down. The dinner was excellent. After the cloth was removed a hymn was sung, at the conclusion of which ABRAHAM CROMPTON, Esq. of Lunevale, near Lancaster, took the chair, in the room of the Rev. W. SHEPHERD, who was unable to attend from indisposition.

The CHAIRMAN rose and said, I must apologize for my inability to do justice to the situation in which you have placed me in consequence of the illness of Mr. Shepherd, which circumstance will deprive us of the services of that Gentleman, who possesses so much eloquence and talent. But, although I may want ability, I do not want zeal. I have attended a previous meeting in this place, and shall be extremely happy to attend many more; but, from the natural course of things, at my time of life, this is not to be expected. I was induced to accept the chair, through the kind offers of support from my young friends near me, who have undertaken to perform the more laborious duties of the office. I shall conclude, by drinking

"Success to the cause, and may it increase in numbers and in strength."

The venerable Chairman again rose, and observed;—I think we may all congratulate ourselves upon the improvement of the times. I do not mean with regard to trade, but as it respects the progress of liberal sentiments, and the spread of useful knowledge.

The Rev. HUGH HUTTON then rose, and said;- I regret, in common with our worthy chairman, the circumstance which deprives us of the services of the Rev. Gentleman, who was to have taken the chair this day; but as many who are present, may not be acquainted with the cause, I apprehend the most satifactory mode will be to communicate it in his own words. A letter from the Rev. W. Shepherd was then read, stating his inability to attend the dinner from indisposition, which concluded in the following terms;—

"My best wishes, however, will attend you, and I congratulate your society on their speed and judgment in the choice of their new Minister."

The regret which all feel at the absence of Mr. Shepherd, must necessarily be heightened by a knowledge of the cause which detains him. We are all of us aware of the zeal which that Gentleman has for so many years evinced in the cause of liberality; and we know that his hand and his heart are always ready to assist in the dissemination of truth. I cannot sit down without expressing my satisfaction, that the Gentleman whom we have selected to supply the place of Mr. Shepherd, has been for a long series of years the consistent advocate of civil and religious liberty. The high character which he has uniformily sustained, renders him an ornament to the station he holds in society; and I congratulate this meeting, that he has acceded to the wishes of his friends, by accepting the office of President this day. It cannot but be gratifying to him, who has grown gray in the service of liberal principles, to have lived long enough to witness the triumph of those principles over Bigotry,

Superstition, and Fanaticism. He will also derive great satisfaction at the assemblage of so numerous a body of young friends on this occasion, who, by their presence, give an earnest of their well wishes to the cause. Our worthy friend has already informed you, that the more laborious duties of the chair must devolve upon others; and we all know that nothing can keep back the trespass of years, that they will steal on, and human nature must give way to their irresistible influence. I have now to bespeak your candour and indulgence, in behalf of myself and those friends who have undertaken these duties, and we will endeavour to make up for the deficiency occasioned by the absence of Mr. Shepherd. The Rev. Gentlemen then gave,

"The sovereignty of the people, and may it never be wielded to promote the interest of a party."

Mr. Hutton then continued:—If it be a just principle, that the interests of the whole body should be consulted on matters which affect their rights and privileges, then the people, who form the sovereignty, ought to have a voice in the choice of their Representatives, and in the appointment of their Magistrates. Mr. Hutton sat down amidst the cheers of the company.

Mr. GREEN then rose; he said, the observations which the last speaker has made, are very applicable to the sentiment I am about to propose. The friends of truth are embarked in a cause, which ought more and more to unite them in its support, because of the prejudices and opposition against which they have to contend. When they look around on the state of the world, and see "the mighty of the earth, the oppressor, the rude and boisterous force of violent of men," arrayed against the progress of truth and freedom; there sometimes arises a fear for the safety of these principles, which are founded on reason and revelation. When we behold the palaces of merchants cemented by the blood of the African, and hear the ready answer of intolerance to the cry of liberty of conscience from men, whose only crime is attachment to the faith of their fore-fathers;—and remember how Princes have been leagued together against the advancement of the human mind; then, is there much to discourage us. But on the other hand, when we think on those periods, in which it was a high crime to speak our sentiments manfully, and contrast them with the comparative freedom of the present age—when we witness the progress of education amongst those who formerly were immersed in darkness and ignorance, there is ground for hope; and we should ill deserve the name of friends to the human race, if we did not persevere in our endeavours to emancipate the human mind. I should be sorry longer to intrude on your attention; and I confidently anticipate your approval of the toast;—

"The progress of public opinion."

Mr. HAWKES next presented himself, and said, on the part of myself I should feel disposed, being entirely unaccustomed to pub- speaking, not to tresspass upon your patience; but the senti- ment is, I think, worthy of a few additional remarks, and I crave your candour and indulgence, whilst I endeavour to elucidate the subject. The progress of public opinion, to be useful, ought gradually to tend to the enlargement of the understanding; but it operates very differently on some men's feelings. From the peculiar circumstance in which we are placed, through having the doctrines of Christianity communicated to us, free from those impurities which obscure and degrade its real character, we are likely to feel some self-sufficiency; and unless this feel- ing be properly restrained, it will leads us to acts, unbecoming us as christians and men; it, therefore, behoves us to guard against the worst of all prides—the pride of knowledge. We are called upon, as Christians, to assist each other; and the life of Christ is a bright example for a Christian to imitate. As citi- zens of a government connected with an Established Hierarchy, we possess great liberties, and are consequently more in danger of being led by arrogance into faction. If we possess greater liberty in religious matters, than is enjoyed in other countries, we should be careful not to abuse it; and the same reasoning will apply to our social duties. Mr. Hawkes then gave,

"As Christians, may we be zealous without uncharitableness; as citi- zens, free, without faction."

The CHAIRMAN said, that being a native of Bolton, he felt himself particularly associated with the next toast, and it was a source of real pleasure to him, to witness such a Society as the Moor Lane Congregation rise up in a town, with whose interests he was so intimately connected. He then gave,

"The Moor Lane Unitarian Christian Congregation and may the gen- tle spirit of love animate the hearts of its members."

Mr. BRANDRETH then addressed the meeting.—Mr. Chair- man and Christian Friends, I claim from you that indulgence which is due to men of limited abilities as public speakers; but the toast which has just been drunk, is one which particularly inter- ests me. It has been drunk for the sixth time, and I trust it will be drunk sixty times six, if the town is in existence at that period; and from the improvements in the arts and sciences, and the progress of liberal opinions, such a circumstance is highly pro- bable. We have, my friends, had great difficulties to contend with, and we have enjoyed many blessings. Our female friends have rendered us much valuable assistance; and so long as we

are favoured with their patronage, I do not doubt of success. Two years since, this Institution had raised within itself £1,522 and from distant friends, £576, making a total of £2,098. Last year, the Seat Rents produced £110, and the Boxes at the doors, £6. In the present year, there has been collected for Seat Rents, £112, and the boxes have made £11, 7s. Individually, we have cause to rejoice; our prospects are brighter, and we are fortunately favoured with a Minister, whose feelings are in unison with those of his people.——I give,

"Gratitude to our friends, and grace to our foes."

The Rev. JOHN CROPPER made a few observations.

The next toast was,

"Our Unitarian female friends, and may the blush of conscious innocence ever deck their faces."

The Rev. J. CROPPER, in a neat speech, introduced the next toast, which was,

"Religion without superstition, and liberty without licentiousness.

After a few observations from Mr. Brandreth, he gave,

"The cause for which Servetns lost his life, Biddle his liberty, Priestley his country, Lindsey, Evanson, Jebb and Wakefield, their emoluments."

Mr. GREEN, in an excellent speech drew a feeling picture of the persecutions undergone by those departed worthies for the cause of truth.

The chairman, said he congratulated the meeting on the times being favourable to political liberty. Fifty years since we were differently situated. He recollected the persecutions alluded to in the toast: he had suffered a little himself. He once had the honour of being in the Magistracy of this county; but, on account of his political opinions, he received a little notice from the present Lord Chancellor (He might now, he believed, call him the late Lord Chancellor.) He was then Sir John Scott, who informed him, that his name was taken out of the Magistracy, and advised him to "retire into private life, and reflect on his past conduct." He gave,

"Protection and provision for the industrious."

Mr. BRANDRETH.—I cannot let this opportunity pass off, without expressing my heartfelt satisfaction, that our worthy and respected Chairman should have lived to see the day, when Eldon must retire into private life, and I hope he will have time given him to reflect; for, although he may have been a long

time Lord High Chancellor of England, he will have to account to that throne for his conduct, before which we must all appear; and I trust, that we are making the necessary preparations for that event.

The Rev. HUGH HUTTON, then introduced the next toast by stating, that there were more than 1,200 children educated in the Unitarian Sunday Schools in Birmingham.

"The Moor Lane Sunday School. May success attend the labours of its teachers, and of every institution, which has for its object the improvement of the rising generation."

Mr. BRADSHAW, in an eloquant and impressive speech, which we regret our limits will not allow us to do more than briefly notice, stated that about four years since, the congregation being desirous to benefit the rising generation, rented rooms for a school, in which children of every denomination were alike instructed; but by the advice, and earnest entreaty of Mr. Harris, the present school rooms were built, which cost upwards of £300; one-sixth of that sum was subscribed for immediately, and within the last year, there have been two collections, amounting to £42; the remainder is still owing, but I hope will be liquidated within a resonable time. Mr. Bradshaw concluded his speech, by exhorting them to preserve that bond of union which at present happily prevailed. He eulogized the superintendents, and their worthy pastor, for their indefatigable exertions, and expressed a wish, that they might "go on, and success attend their labours."

The next toast was,

"The progress of Unitarian Christianity all over the world."

Mr. BARROW took a luminous view of the progress of Unitarian Christianity, in various parts of the globe; but alluded, particularly, to America, which he emphatically described as the seat of independence; and where he said, genuine christianity was making rapid strides. He concluded an admirable speech, by entreating those present to do all in their power to assist in this holy cause, by which blessings would be conferred upon generations yet unborn, which they were unable to calculate upon.

Mr. HEYWOOD, after a few remarks, gave,

"The consistent advocate and inquirer after religious truth, the Rev. Hugh Hutton, and thanks to him for his services on this occasion."

The Rev. HUGH HUTTON returned thanks. He said, that if any thing had been wanting, since he became an Unitarian, to encourage him to persevere, the liberal and enlightened sentiments which he had heard expressed that day, and the handsome manner in which his name had been introduced, would be

a sufficient inducement. It was his good fortune to have paid a good price for his Unitarianism, and it was equally dear to him, in proportion to the price he had paid for it. It was the richest prize that ever came into his hands. Educated, as he was, amongst the Calvinistic Presbyterians of Ireland, it had cost him no little sacrifice to give up his former opinions. Those who had passed from one faith to another, could judge correctly on these points. He was not making a boast of this, for his change of sentiment had cost him his home, his country, and his original prospects in life. He was happy to meet his young friend, Mr. Cropper, under such auspicious circumstances, and he should quit Bolton with many of those prejudices removed which he had brought with him. He concluded, by proposing the health of

"The Rev. John Cropper, pastor of the congregation, and may concord, peace, and harmony subsist between him and his people; and may they be the promoters of each others joy, and the strengtheners of each others hands in the works of piety, charity and zeal.

The Rev. JOHN CROPPER then rose, and returned thanks for the very feeling manner in which his health had been drunk. It was no small source of gratification to him, to see so much happiness pervade the people, amongst whom he was so happily situated. Dissenting, as he did with them, from principles, which cannot be reconciled with reason, he would recommend a decision of character, that their enemies might know, that if they struck hard, they would be struck hard again. For himself, he would promise, that he would not be accounted one of those who took a middle part, but would use his utmost exertions to promulgate those doctrines, which they all believed to be the truth and the only truth.

The Rev. HUGH HUTTON then proposed the health of

"Our worthy Chairman, Abraham Crompton, Esq. the uniform supporter of the rights and privileges of the people, with our cordial thanks for his services this day."

The CHAIRMAN, in a feeling and impressive manner, returned thanks, expressing a sincere hope, that he should have the happiness of meeting them next year. He then left the room amidst the cheers of the meeting.

Mr. EDWARD MAKIN then gave,

"The healths of two Gentlemen who were absent, the Rev. W. Shepherd, and Mr. F. B. Wright; success to the Christian Reflector, and may the Press be as free as the wind."

The next toast, by Mr. Hutton, was,

"Prosperity to the Unitarian Missionary Association of Lancashire and Cheshire.

Mr. HAWKES detailed, at some length, the progress of the society, which appears to be in a prosperous state, and gave,

"May Chistian nations become nations of Christians; and the din of war, and the crimes of the oppressor, be heard of no more."

Mr. CROPPER then gave,

"Our Christian brethren, of every denomination, in this town and neighbourhood; may they fearlessly follow the convictions of their own minds."

"Catholic Emancipation;—and may Bigotry, Superstition, and Religious Tyranny soon come to an end; and the celebrated aphorism be realized,—"See how these Christians love one another."

Mr. MAKIN, in a long and powerful speech, advocated the claims of the Catholics, and shewed the injustice of depriving a number of our Christian brethren of their rights, whose sole crime was the worshipping their Maker according to the dictates of their own conscience."

A number of other toasts were given, the last of which was,

"Our Country, and may it prove a Land of Liberty to the end of time."

About half-past five o'clock the company separated; and in the evening, an excellent Sermon was preached at the Meeting House, by the Rev. Hugh Hutton.

On Tuesday, the Scholars educated at the Sunday School, upwards of 100 in number, dined together in the Cloth Hall; and after suitable admonitions from the pastor of the Congregation, and Mr. Hawkes, they returned home, highly delighted with the entertainment.

MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

THE fifth half yearly General Meeting of the Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts, Unitarian Missionary Association, was held at Marshfield, on the day called Good Friday, April 13th. The Rev. Robert Cree, of Preston, delivered two admirable discourses to numerous and attentive audiences; in the morning, on the connection of Unitarianism with the improvement and happiness of mankind, (from Eph. iv. 6.) and in the evening, on the proper

use of our talents, (from 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. and Luke xii. 48.) Mr. Martin, the minister of Marshfield, read the hymns, and the devotional services were conducted, in the morning by the Rev. Theophilus Browne, and in the evening, by the Rev. R. Wright.

Friends were present from Calne, Ashwick, Trowbridge, Bath, and Nailsworth, who afterwards, to the number of forty two, including females, partook of an economical dinner at the Codrington Arms. The Rev. R. Wright was in the chair, and to him the company were much indebted for his able and eloquent addresses. At the removal of the cloth, the accustomed hymn of thanks was sung. In the course of the afternoon, several appropriate toasts were given which called forth remarks from Messrs. Hale, Cree, Howse, and Martin, and the Secretary read an interesting report of the proceedings of the committee since the last half yearly meeting. At an early hour the company separated to tea at the houses of several hospitable members of the congregation. The meeting throughout was truly gratifying; it proved a season of sacred delight to many, and will long be remembered by all who were present. M.

REMOVAL OF MINISTERS.

THE Rev. Samuel Martin, of Marshfield, has accepted the unaminous invitation of the congregation at Trowbridge to become their minister; to which place he will remove at Michaelmas next.

THE Rev. W. Hincks of Liverpool, has accepted the office of Tutor in Manchester College, York, in the place of Mr. Turner, who has resigned. Mr. H. is expected to leave Liverpool early in September next.

CORPORATION AND TEST ACTS.

The Petition of the Dissenters (Unitarians) in Liverpool and its vicinity has been presented to the House of Lords by the Marquis of Landdown; that to the Commons will be presented by Mr. Huskisson on the re-assembling of the House. Lord John Russell intends to bring forward a motion for the repeal of these acts early in June next.

The following letter has been addressed by Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, to the Independent Ministers of Lancashire.

Manchester, April 5th, 1827.—Rev. and Dear Sir;—I am directed to send you a copy of the following resolution, passed at the Annual Meeting of the "Lancashire County Union for the spread of the gospel," held this day in Manchester:—

"Resolved,—That, in the opinion of this meeting, it is desirable that the congregations in this county should stand prepared to support petitions to Parliament for the repeal of the "Corporation and Test Acts" whenever the societies in London shall think it a suitable time to express the sense of the Protestant Dissenters, throughout the kingdom, on the subject.—I am, Reverend and dear Sir, your's faithfully,

THOMAS RAFFLES, SEC.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR

AND

THEOLOICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 30. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* JUNE, 1, 1827.

A SHORT SUMMARY OF UNITARIAN VIEWS.

INTRODUCTION.

MANY persons, particularly teachers of religion in different churches, have exerted their talents and influence to show that Unitarianism is a horrible species of religion, and that Unitarians are dangerous characters. They have not, however, fairly stated the genuine principles of Unitarianism, nor brought forward any legitimate arguments to prove their erroneousness and dangerous tendency. They have, commonly contented themselves with vague assertions pronounced in a confident and peculiar tone, accompanied with certain gestures significant of horror. Some of them have never read a Unitarian book, and others have contented themselves with false and garbled statements furnished by reviews and other periodical publications, all employed in the same cause—that of orthodoxy. This mode of proceeding has, generally, produced the effects intended. The multitude have believed such declamations to be true. They view their pastors as good men; they believe that they will not knowingly state any thing which is false; they have no suspicion of foul play; and they generally conclude that Unitarianism and Unitarians are what they are commonly represented as being, from the pulpit and the orthodox press.

It is also worthy of remark that some Unitarian ministers, confiding in the excellence of their cause, have disdained to reply to such statements in a plain manner; others, on account of their situations and connexions, have all their leisure time employed in classical, mathematical, and philosophical pursuits;

whilst others have exercised their talents in biblical criticism which though highly proper and excellent in itself, is almost above the capacities of the multitude, and fit only for more enlightened and polished minds.

Impressed with these sentiments, the writer has drawn up a short summary, which he thinks may be useful to those who have neither time, inclination, nor learning sufficient to investigate more learned works. He writes for the plain, unlettered multitude, and he flatters himself that this Essay, if read, will show that Unitarianism is not blasphemy, nor Unitarians infidels. He is of opinion that thousands condemn Unitarianism because they are unacquainted with its principles; and that if they understood them, they would admire and embrace what they now censure and hold in abhorrence.

It is hoped that in the following pages nothing will appear which can be deemed illiberal. The writer would be very sorry to use even a single expression calculated to give pain to any virtuous mind. Amidst the numerous religious errors which exist, it is pleasing to reflect that there are excellent characters in every sect and party of professing christians; and that a time will come when all such persons will be united in glory and happiness. May all christians fairly study each others views before they pronounce sentence; and where they really differ, may they exercise that charity which thinketh no evil, and which doth not behave itself unseemly.

Sec. I. *Concerning the use of reason in religious matters.*

We believe that the exercise of reason is both necessary and proper in religious matters.

1. By reason we understand that faculty in man which enables him to find out truths, to arrange them in methodical order, to perceive their connexion, and to draw right conclusions.*

2. Reason, like revelation, is a gift from heaven, and has been imparted to us to be exercised for our benefit, and to the glory of its all-wise diposer.

3. In all the concerns of life the exercise of reason is necessa-

* Vide Locke on the Human Understanding.

ry, and nothing can be judiciously effected without its agency. We can neither guide the plough nor throw the shuttle without its assistance. This is admitted by all parties, and in proportion to its exercise man is more or less advanced to honour and affluence, or reduced to disgrace and poverty.

4. We cannot understand the evidences of christianity without the exercise of reason. If we are told that the Deity has imparted a knowledge of his will, it is not only proper but highly necessary to ascertain the truth of the assertion; for many impostors have appeared and imposed upon human credulity. On this point, the orthodox and the hetorodox, the Trinitarian and the Unitarian are all agreed.

5. If the exercise of reason be necessary in ascertaining the divine origin of the christian religion, it is no less so in understanding the nature and bearings of the truths delivered. How can we do our Lord's will without knowing it, and how can we know it without the use of reason? Revelation affords no benefits either to the idiot, or to the person who has been unfortunately prevented from examining it: the former is incapable of reasoning, and the latter has not an opportunity of judging of its contents.

6. In arguing for the use of reason in religious matters, the Unitarians *do not exalt reason above revelation* as has been most rashly and frequently asserted. Those, on the contrary, who use such language, with reference to the Unitarians, are the first to exercise this gift when it is favorable to their own cause. They only disclaim its use when it is opposed to their views, and proves them to be *unreasonable.* * Then it is, and then only, that they inconsistently exclaim. "carnal reason!—do you set reason above revelation?" To this we reply,—reason can only be called carnal when it it under the influence of base desires; and it is exalted above revelation only when it sets revelation aside, and proceeds upon the foolish principle of its own perfect sufficiency. Neither of these is applicable to the Unitarians; they endeavour to reason justly and with pure views, and they use their natural powers, not in superseding the revelation of heaven, but in ascertaining its import and tendency.

(*) Hobbes has well observed, that no man is against reason till reason is against him.

If we be informed that a rich and benevolent friend has made a will in our favour, it surely is neither presumptuous in us, nor disrespectful to the testator to make enquiry as to the correctness of the report, and, if true, to investigate the different clauses in the will. The exercise of reason, in these respects, neither supersedes the testament nor itself alters any of its clauses; and it would only be an affront to the memory of the benevolent testator to take no further notice of such a deed executed for our advantage.

Apply this to religion. The Almighty has spoken to man that he may understand, but no one will be hardy enough to affirm that he can understand the will of God without a proper examination of his word, and this can only be done by the exercise of reason. At the same time, reason without revelation is incompetent, and revelation without reason is useless; but let both be given and properly exercised, and they will produce the grandest results, and successfully resist the most formidable attacks. When James the first had read Calderwood's book entitled *Altare Damescenum*, his majesty was very uneasy. Let not this disturb your majesty, said one of the bishops, we will answer the book. "Tush mon," retorted the peevish monarch, "what wid ye answer, 'tis naething but scraptur and razon."*

Sec. II. *Concerning God.*

We believe that there is a God, the Maker and Governor of the heavens and the earth: that he is ONE ONLY; that he possesses within himself all possible perfections; that he is the Father and Friend of all his creatures; and that he delights in virtuous actions.

1. The scripture assumes the being of a God as a self-evident truth, and asserts that he made and still governs the heavens and the earth. The variety, beauty, grandeur and perpetual order, and harmony of creation prove that there must be One almighty and infinitely intelligent first glorious cause whom we

* Robert Robinsonson's Miscell. Works, vol. II. p. 120.

name God. Hence the Psalmist beautifully said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmanent sheweth his handy work." History, however, proves that a knowledge of one intelligent and almighty first cause could not be learned from the works of nature alone. The most enlightened heathen sages of antiquity were unable to find out this truth by the mere energies of reason, though aided by some of the most grand and beautiful scenes in nature; but when revelation appeared and spoke of the existence of God as an undeniable axiom; the works of nature acknowledged its justness and corroborated the accuracy of the sacred page.

2. Revelation most decidedly asserts that God is One only, and knows of no competitor; and that he is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This truth receives illustration from the works of nature where we perceive such unity of design and operation as fully justifies us in concluding that there is only one first Great Cause who reigns alone and uncontrolled. Upon this principle ws reject the notions of polytheism, so prevalent in ancient times, when men were without light and without a knowledge of God in the world.

3. Adopting the reasoning advanced in the preceeding article, we also reject the common and popular notion of a trinity of persons in the Godhead. The word trinity never occurs in the bible, nor is the doctrine itself distinctly stated in any genuine text, paragraph, chapter or book in the sacred writings; and though its advocates have made many bold assertions in its favour, they have always been forced to acknowledge, when closely pressed, the accuracy of this statement, and to admit that the idea of a trinity is only *inferential.* Farther, all those texts of scripture which are supposed to prove the doctrine in question, may be, and indeed often have been explained in a different sense, without offering any violation to scripture or to legitimate reasoning. The notion of a trinity is such as bids defiance to explanation and cannot be submitted to any rules of logic or arithmetic. It is not merely *above* reason, but decidedly *contrary* to it. It was never stated and explained by Jesus Christ

and his apostles. It seems to have had its origin in the system of Plato; and by some it has been conjectured that the Athanasian Creed, which is supposed to prove and explain it, and which is still read in Episcopalian churches, was originally composed as a burlesque, instead of being a defence of the notion in question. Until, then, such a doctrine be clearly stated in the scripture, and that with a distinctness and force proportional to its present obscurity, we think it right to dissent and to declare that "There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him."

4. That God possesses all possible perfections is clear from many explicit statements of scripture. Nature confirms this view, and every enlightened mind acknowledges its truth. To attempt any further illustration were unnecessary: it would only be proving that the sun shines, and that its rays are beneficial to the world.

5. Jesus Christ, by his inimitable instructions, has corrected the false views of man respecting the Almighty, and completely established his truth and goodness. Enlightened by the brilliant statements of our Master, we no longer view the Deity as the Jupiter of heathenism attended by his eagle and grasping his thunderbolts, nor do we regard him as the Jehovah of the Jews dwelling in thick darkness and hurling around the lightnings of mount Sinai; but we are induced to consider him as the most just, wise and merciful of Beings. Divesting our minds of terror and slavish fear, we can with holy and religious confidence approach this glorious Being and say, "Our Father who art in heaven."

6. As God is the pure and benevolent Being described, it follows that he is good and must delight in virtue. They who are most virtuous resemble him the most, and are the objects of his tender regards. We find, indeed, that many of his dispensations appear dark and mysterious for the present, yet we are confidently told that all thing work together for good to virtuous characters; and we are sure that God.

"From seeming evil still educes good,
And better thence again, and better still
In infinite progression."

Sec. III. *Concerning the Existence of a Devil.*

We do not believe in the personal existence of a Devil.

1. Though the scripture justly requires us to believe in the existence and perfections of God, it does not, in any place, command us to believe in the personal existence of a devil; and we have no notion of being wise, upon religious subjects, above what is written, nor to believe, as an article of saving faith, what the scripture does not require. This declaration may be astounding to uninformed minds, but we are induced to make it from a regard to truth, and all sensible persons, however they may differ from us on this point, will duly appreciate our motives and candidly examine our reasons.

2. The notion of a devil is not stated in the scripture, with the exception of the book of Job, until after the Babylonish captivity, and some very learned critics are of opinion that the book of Job was written subsequently to that period. The phraseology used by the Jewish prophets during the Babylonish captivity and at later periods by Christ and his apostles, justifies us in concluding that the terms, devil, demon, satan and the like, refer to wicked men, to some terrible disorders of the mind, as in cases of insanity, and to evil or sin personified, and not to any personal, infernal agent.(*) The Chaldeans were famed for their belief in personal, invisible agents both good and bad, and from them, it is thought, the captive Jews obtained those ideas and expressions which abound in the prophecy of Zechariah and the New Testament, and which have had such a wonderful influence upon the christian world for upwards of eighteen hundred years.

3. Those who still entertain such opinions attribute powers to the devil which are totally inconsistent with truth, and which accord better with the Manichean system of an almighty evil principle coeval with the almighty good principle, than with pure christianity. According to the popular notion, the devil is every where, und all kind of evil is imputed to his agency.

(*) Vide Farmer on the Demoniacs of the New Testament.

Hence the wicked, as an apology for their crimes, commonly affirm that they were tempted by the devil. This is, indeed, a convenient way of shifting the crime from their own shoulders, and placing it upon those of his satanic majesty. He is the general scape goat in the common creed. A good man, who was considered to be as sound in the faith as either Knox or Calvin, once asked the writer, and that in a very serious manner, "Is not the Devil God Almighty's brother?" Shocking as this question may appear, it is by no means inconsistent with the common idea of a devil and the ubiquity and powers which he is said to possess. (*)

OF THE LOVE OF LIFE IN OLD AGE.

It has often been remarked, that the longer we live, the more we become attached to life. Is this feeling proper? It cannot be. Is it inevitable? Its impropriety proves that it is not. It is at variance with that decree of the Almighty, which hath "appointed unto all men once to die." It is inconsistent with that animating assurance of Christianity, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." It must therefore be wrong; and, consequently, it cannot be inevitable. Christianity would banish it, and would raise the thoughts to another and a better world; even to "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for us in heaven."

Dr. Young has the following reflections on the subject.

"What folly can be ranker? Like our shadows,
Our wishes lengthen, as our sun declines."

(*) The writer recollects that, when the Rev. John Grundy delivered a lecture in Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, upon the non-existence of a devil, a great sensation was excited, and among other anecdotes the following one was widely circulated. On the morning after the delivery of the Lecture in question some young gentlemen met at a barber's shop, and one of them asked another, "Did you hear Grundy last night?" "No," was the reply. "Why, what do you think? Grundy says there is no devil!" "Indeed!" added a third, "I wonder what the Methodists will do, for they are the very devil for the devil."

"O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!
Poor human ruins, tott'ring o'er the grave!
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?
Shall our pale, wither'd hands, be stretch'd out,
Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age?
With av'rice, and convulsions, grasping hard?
Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?"

"*Night Thoughts.*"

There is much point, too, in the following reflections of Webb, in the conclusion of Sermon I.

"One should imagine, that those in the more advanced age, who have experienced what this world can afford, and are now past its enjoyments, should need more of comfort than exhortation; one should naturally suppose those the more eligible arguments, which tend to reconcile them to this state of being, in order to induce them to bear their continuance here without murmur or complaint. But, in fact, this is not generally the case. Mankind are not the better fitted to die, the nearer they aproach their latter end. The love of life does not proportionably decline with our declining sun. The feeble eye, upon which the beauties of nature shine in vain, which the light of day miserably affects, shall be lifted to heaven, in humble supplication to implore a lengthened period. The trembling hand, that scarcely can supply the tasteless mouth with food, shall be impotently raised to beg the mighty boon, that it may tremble still longer. The loosened knees shall bend, in ardent request, that they may still bear the tottering frame, worn out with decay. O! age, where is thy wisdom? What can delight thee more? The flowers are faded; the day of festivity is passed; the evening shades draw on. Do not all thy senses, or rather their poor remains, inform thee, that the world can grant no more? Prepare then decently to quit the world, that has already quitted thee; resign thy title to enjoyment here: and if thou hast not secured a better inheritance, it is now too late; the first-fruits should have been heaven's. What can the falling vine yield?

Trust to thy Creator, shew the duty of resignation, thou canst discharge no other. Let us all learn to improve the present time; for on the instant moment, eternity depends."

Age shews the veteran Christian, it should be "rich in good fruits;" it should be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" it should be ready to "depart, and be with Christ." Its language and its hopes should be, "the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Such should be the sentiments and feelings of old age. But if the reverse of these be displayed, Oh, how the time has run to waste, and the talents been forgotton, neglected or abused! For a barren old age shews a mispent life.

These remarks perhaps cannot be better concluded than by the following lines from a pleasing modern Poet.

"There is a land, where everlasting suns
Shed everlasting brightness—where the soul
Drinks from the living streams of love, that roll
By God's high throne!—myriads of glorious ones
Bring there th' accepted offering. O how blest
To look from this dark prison to that shrine,
T' inhale one breath of paradise divine—
And enter into that eternal rest
Which waits the sons of God! Remote from care,
Remote from disappointment, to employ
Hours never-ending in the courts of joy,
And wear a crown of heavenly splendour there!
With such a destiny, what earthly fear,
What earthly woe, shall cloud my spirit? None.
Forward, then, forward to the golden throne

Why should our restless wishes linger here?
See from the clouds a smiling angel calls,
"Come hither, Christians!—Open is the door—
The path is straight—delay not—doubt no more—
Lo! thou art welcome to the heavenly halls."
Father—I go!—I hear th' inviting sound—
No more shall earthly objects dim my eyes—
Away, away the world's dull vanities!
I hasten on—to heaven—to Eden bound."

Bowring's Matins and Vespers.

C.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from page 105.)

The Creed of Saint Athanasius.

ACCORDING to this creed, three Gods are one God; and one God is three Gods. That is, the plural is the singular, and the singular is the plural. Or things directly opposite in meaning are the same. And in this Trinity-Unity, none is afore or after other. Yet, the Father is of none; the Son is of the Father; and the Holy Ghost is of the Father, and of the Son. That is, the Father is underived; the Son is derived from the Father; and the holy Ghost is derived from both the Father and the Son. Or thus; the Father is the first in point of time; the Son is the second in point of time; and the Holy Ghost is the third in point of time. And yet none is afore or after other.

It is affirmed that there are three persons that are almighty; which is the same as affirming that there is not one almighty. For if three possess equal power, what can be more evident than that one does not possess all power?

It is said, that Christ is perfect God, and perfect man; which is the same as saying that he is neither the one, nor the other. For a being so compounded, would be a semi-divine, and a semi-human being. Or he would be a divine-human, and a human-

divine being; which is about as rational as to say white-black, light-darkness. But then, according to this notion, a perfect God and a perfect man, constituting one being,—what becomes of the declaration of Jesus Christ, that "God is a spirit?" This is fatal to the whole hypothesis.

To crown the whole, we are told, that unless we keep this doctrine, which no rational person can believe, "whole and undefiled, without doubt we shall perish everlastingly!" What daring presumption! equalled only by the extreme folly of this senseless jargon.

This Creed bears the name of Saint Athanasius; but who was its author is unknown. Some persons think, (and it is the wisest thought that can be entertained on the subject) that it was written as a burlesque upon the Trinity, which the wise clergy in ancient days mistook for a serious piece of divinity, and bound it up with the heterogeneous mass composing the Prayer Book. However, to the credit of many of the ministers, they never read it; and many members of the Church, when it is read, never open their books; and they wish, with the amiable Archbishop Tillotson, that the Church were well rid of it. To hasten the arrival of such an event, it might not perhaps be amiss, if they would well rid themselves of the Church.

(See some admirable Lectures on this Creed in the 6th volume of the *Christian Reformer.)*

THE LITANY.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God: have mercy on us miserable sinners.

"Miserable," indeed, to use such language! Find a parallel passage to this in the whole scriptures, if you can; but if you cannot, you ought to pause, ere you give utterence to it, in the act of devotion. Here we have, not merely a trinity, but a quarternity, not only three, but four. It is not said three persons *in* one God; but three persons *and* one God. That is, there are *three* persons, and then *one* God in addition; which make *four*.

Else, what is the meaning of the conjunction *and*? This has escaped the notice of the framers of the Church Service; and it escapes the notice too of the persons who engage in that service every Lord's day. How truly may it be said of them, "they worship they know not what!"

By the mystery of thy holy incarnation; by thy holy nativity and circumcision; by thy baptism, fasting and temptation, Good Lord deliver us.

By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord deliver us.

Of course, the members of the church of England are here addressing the Almighty, in the act of prayer. Let me, then, seriously ask the conscientious believer in this church, whether it is not highly improper and offensive, to speak of God, who is eternal, and in whose sight millions of worlds are as nothing, as being in agony, covered with bloody sweat, and afterwards dead and buried? or can we find in any heathen service, a greater piece of superstition and profaneness? Let me also ask, in the language of Dr. Channing "whether to worshippers, who adore their God for his wounds and tears, his agony, and blood, and sweat, the ideas of corporeal existence and human suffering will not predominate over the conceptions of purely spiritual essence? whether the mind in clinging to the man will not lose the God? whether a surer method for depressing and adulterating the pure thought or the Divinity could have been devised?" (See Channing's Sermon, "The Superior Tendency of Unitarianism, &c." p. 14. *Liverpool Edition.)*

But perhaps it may be doubtful, whether church people think at all on the subject; for if they did, could they worship a God "by his nativity and circumcision, &c.?—could they worship "*a human deity*," and under such gross ideas? Surely they have yet to learn that "God is a Spirit."

The fourth Sunday in Advent.

THE COLLECT.

O Lord, raise up, we pray thee, thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us, that whereas through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction *of thy son our Lord; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. Amen.*

Here is mentioned the shocking doctrine of divine satisfaction. This doctrine is thus stated in the words of Calvin: "In his soul Christ suffered the torments of a damned and forsaken man, that his office was to make the Father favourable and merciful unto us, that God appeased himself through the blood of the cross, that the burden of damnation from which we were delivered was laid upon Christ, and that there is no satisfaction by which God being displeased may be made favourable and well pleased."

Much might be said respecting this doctrine, but brevity is necessary in these Commentaries.

First, then, the doctrine is immoral. Men may sin as they please; for all their sins have already been suffered and atoned for; and they have only to believe it, and they are washed from all guilt by the blood of the lamb.

It is impossible. Sins cannot be transferred from one to another, like burdens which men carry on their shoulders.

It is absurd. The same being is wrathful and compassionate at the same time, insists upon a satisfaction to his injured justice, and dies to satisfy himself. God is his *own* victim, which he offers to himself. No, his victim is only one half of one third of himself—the human nature of his second person. Yet, though it is only a fraction of the Deity, and the corporeal part of the Deity, it is an infinite sacrifice. In other words, a part is equal to the whole, a finite is equal to infinite.

The doctrine is unscriptural. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c." Love, not wrath, was the origin of Christ's mission. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;" It is not God that is reconciled, but the world. It is not Christ that is the reconciler, but God. "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him; and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." "Every one shall receive according to his deeds." All therefore are individually responsible, and individually accountable for their own sins. (See Mr. Wright's "Free Grace of God."

It may be a serious question, but it is their own language—Do Trinitarians worship a being who "suffered the torments of a damned and forsaken man?" The idea is most shocking and worse than heathenish. But, I repeat, it is Trinitarian!

It may be well to observe, that the Collects in the Common Prayer Book are expressly taught to children; and that in a number of these, another being beisdes the one true God is worshipped. Parents should reflect upon this, and should be careful that their children be not taught idolatry. Jehovah says, "I am God, and there is none else." "There is no God beside me"

PURGATOR.

(To be continued.)

CHURCH AND STATE, OR THE ALTAR AND THE THRONE.

MR. EDITOR,

"TIME changes all things," is a common adage. And in this age we perceive that wisdom and learning did not die with our forefathers. Even Dissenters are found not inimical to the church as by law established.

A well known and highly respectable Dissenting Minister lately volunteered his services in behalf of mother church. The solemnity with which the opinion was publicly delivered, not as hastily embraced, but as the result of long and dispassionate in-

quiry,' delivered by an individual of commanding talents, and high attainments, universally celebrated as the staunch advocate of civil and religious liberty, must have great influence, and if it be false, be doubly mischievous. "I have studied" says the Rev. Gentleman, "the theory of our constitution in the works of the most approved authors. I have studied its practice by a minute investigation of the history of my country; and the result of my research is this—that the constitution of Britain is essentially monarchical, and that the Throne and the Church are so closely allied that they must stand or fall together." (*)

The principles of dissent were once considered too vastly important to be recklessly sacrificed, even at public meetings, though surrounded by admiring friends and half won antagonists. It was a cause which could support its advocates in privation and suffering, and for which they relinquished honour and emolument, for reproach and adversity. It could nerve them to high resolves and unbending sternness, in defence of the rights of conscience, and invigorate and sustain that unshaken integrity and inflexibility of soul, which supported the fathers of dissent in their glorious career, in their uncompromising hostility to mental thraldom, their fearless avowal of the inalienable right of man to judge for himself, their unwavering protest against the assumption of authority to dictate what must be believed, and who must be adored: their indignant rejection of a parliamentary God, and of the sorry privilege of worshipping in the contracted trammels of a state religion, and their magnanimous refusal to bow the knee to the golden image, which statecraft had set up. Sorely were they visited for their righteous conduct,—bitter the cup they were doomed to drink; but the noble stand they made, against the slavish requirements of a dominant church, and the assumptions of a haughty hierarchy, has established their praise in all the churches, and enrolled them in the honourable band of worthies, who have proved

* Speech of the Rev. William Shepherd, at a Public Meeting held in Liverpool, 9th May, as reported in the Liverpool Mercury of the 10th inst.

themselves benefactors of their species. But these days are gone by, and the spirit which animated our puritan fathers seems to have fled for ever. Else surely dissenting ministers could not be found to express such a sentiment, as that above recorded. Had the opinion dropped from the lips of a servile expectant of clerical dignity, or a time serving sycophant, intent only upon worming himself into the good graces of power and patronage dispensers; had it been delivered by some well fed pluralist, or mitred dignitary, it would have been in keeping with his situation and character. But the acknowledged reputation of the speaker is founded on his tried firmness, in his long and unwearied advocacy of principles the very reverse; whose talents were devoted to the defence of the rights and privileges of his fellow men; who fearless of the unequal contest was ever at his post, uniting heart and hand with that small but honourable phalanx, whose exertions were directed to the promotion of the welfare and liberties of their species, and who avowed and defended those principles, now apparently becoming fashionable, though once so unpopular. This his high character preserves him from imputation, in the delivery of sentiments, which if advocated by another, would certainly be ascribed. That he expressed himself with honesty and with candor, is uncontrovertible, but did no misgivings steal over him, when the empty plaudits of the meeting rung in his ears, from the consciousness that his expression might be so construed by friends to things as they are. —by the prejudiced and bigoted, as to make completely against that cause he had so often exerted himself to support? Did he feel no apprehension, that he was granting a concession which involved the fundamental principle of dissent, because if true, dissenters are not, cannot be, admirers or supporters of "the constitution of Britain," and that he was branding himself and his brethren as disloyal subjects, and in fact enemies to the state: thus pointing the arrow which the malice of adversaries could not alone direct; giving weight to their calumnies, and affording a voucher to their misrepresentations, for which the hollow applause of a public meeting is but a poor reward.

But is the sentiment borne out by fact; The vast majority of Nonconformists will answer decidedly in the negative. The church as by law established, is the servant and creature, not the ally and equal of the state. She is a powerful engine of state policy, and as such is entrusted with power, patronage and wealth, in a word with bribes to purchase independence, as well as to entice cupidity or lure ambition. Her influence is increased by the operation of proscriptive enactments, she being thereby enabled to address the fears as well as excite the hopes of the community. And by this unholy connection the principles of christianity are recklessly sacrificed. Her spiritual lords are not exemplars of superior humility; the pluralities she bestows do not illustrate a peculiar singleness of heart in her children; her enormous wealth cannot promote the simplicity essential to the character of true disciples of Christ, nor her various ranks and dignities demonstrate her to be not of this world. Her connection with the state obliges her to prostitute her sacrament to every political adventurer, or mercenary character, however flagitious be his life. She is obliged to present her holy elements to the most immoral and wicked liver, who may laugh her and her ordinances to scorn, and make an idle jest of all she considers sacred, making of her a convenient stepping stone in rising to power; commanding her assistance to further his schemes of political aggrandizement. Does this add to her sanctity—is it not a sore degradation?

The church is dependant on the state. By the will of the monarch, the Catholic church crumbled into dust, and her immense revenues remained at his disposal. By regal authority another sprang into existence, and from that source derived honors and power and wealth. Again the decree was issued, and the Church of England ceased to exist, and presbyterianism became dominant; and again was the church resuscitated and reinstated in its pristine splendour, which to this day it retains. But it may once more be driven from courts and palaces, again degraded, and its enormous wealth applied to other purposes, whilst the Throne would remain unaltered, in all its stability dignity and splendour.

A DISSENTER.

EFFECTS OF DOCTRINAL POINTS.

Every Tree is known by its Fruits.

We copy the following article from the New York Christian Inquirer, and recommend it to the attention, of those who are sound in the faith.

"Once a Baptist preacher, whose name we forbear to mention, was travelling through a wilderness part of the western country. The day was very cold and wet. In the evening late he arrived at a rustic dwelling, buried in the depth of a gloomy forest. A cheerful fire enlivened the cottage hearth—its inmates gave him a hearty welcome, and set before him their frugal viands. At length the conversation was turned to the subject of religion—it was soon ascertained that the host of the inn was a Scotch Presbyterian of the strictest sect—that the traveller was a Baptist minister. The Scotchman very liberally spoke of the ignorance of the Baptist clergy, their want of education, &c. The guest in turn, questioned the validity of the Scotchman's baptism. 'What, mon,' said he, 'do ye deny infant baptism? I'll prove it in a moment; that I will, you heritic.' With this, he took from his dusty shelf, a well smoked, old, rusty *Westminster*. 'See here it is, mon, ye heritic, do ye see it?' 'I do, indeed, see it,' replied the minister, 'but I am not prepared to acknowledge the authority of this book, it is not the bible—its authority I disclaim.' 'What,' rejoined the Scotchman, 'ye deny the confession, do ye? Say that again, and I'll down you, ye blasphemer—get ye gone this moment, ye vile heritic.' 'May I not tarry in your house this dreary night,' said the preacher in a low and persuasive tone—'there is no other house near, if I lie out, I shall perish.' No, I'll lodge no such heritic as ye are, get ye gone this instant, or I'll teach you how to deny the confession again, ye ignorant bawptist.' The preacher finding it useless to sue for quarters, departed to take up lodgings in the woods. Every thing being wet, he found it very difficult to kindle a fire. But no sooner was his fire kindled, than a huge

bull drove him from his encampment, and resolutely kept possession. By this time he was almost exhausted—he again repairs to the cottage, sues for admission, and requests that he may be permitted to lie by the fire. The old man returned him a rough repulsive response. He now began to despair—thought he must perish, till he heard the worthy matron of the house, say, 'ould mon, ye know how bad that bull is, the man will freeze, let him lie by the fire." At length, overcome by the importunity of his wife, the zealous old christian opened the door, the stranger enjoyed the hospitality of his fire, and in the morning set out for a more enlightened part of the state.

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

The Catholic claims have been often considered by Parliament, and have been as often denied. We wonder (perhaps we have no reason to wonder,) whether our Legislators, when treating the Catholics thus cruelly, ever ask themselves, if they are "doing as they would be done by?" Or is this precept the only precept that is not "part or parcel of the law?" For our own parts, if there was no other reason to be urged in behalf of the Catholics, it would be quite sufficient to command our suffrage in their favour; and we cannot see how any christian can resist the force of its appeal. Nay, we scruple not to say, that this precept is grossly violated by the opponents of Catholic emancipation; and when we make this assertion, we feel quite confident that it cannot be refuted.

If Catholics have been persecutors in times part, it is not just to "visist the sins of the fathers upon the children." If Catholics possess something of a persecuting spirit even in the present day, it is the duty of christians to endeavour to "overcome evil with good." And it is surely much wiser to study to conciliate, than to irritate them—to make them friends, than to make them or confirm them enemies. No possible good can arise from the present mode of treating them, but much harm. Bad feeling must inevitably be engendered, while consequences may result in the future, awful to contemplate by every benevolent person. It is therefore not less the policy, than the duty of christians to grant the Catholics their civil rights; that is, to "do to them, as they would be done by."

The following excellent remarks on the subject, are from the able pen of Mr. Montgomery, late of the Sheffield Iris, and the author of "The Hero of Switzerland," "The World before the Flood," and other poems;

we present them to the notice of our readers, to show the folly and injustice of this pertinacious denial of the claims of the Catholics.

"A man's belief," says this able writer, "is determined just in proportion to the use which he makes of the means in his power for the ascertainment of truth. It is in his power to use those means either honestly or deceitfully, diligently or negligently; but it is not in his power, so far as he does use them honestly, to resist the force of that evidence which they bring before his understanding. He believes nothing that he can help believing, for what appears true to him, is true to him, however it may be or appear to one, two, or ten thousand persons beside, under different impressions. Voluntary belief is an absolute solecism; while, on the other hand, the mind can no more chuse whether it will receive conviction, upon evidence producing conviction, than the unobstructed eye refuse to admit the light, or the clear lake to reflect the firmament. To compel belief is beyond the power of all created beings, and to reject it is equally impossible. Human laws cannot make a man accountable for what they cannot enforce; and even if they attempt it, no man owes obedience where God himself has made obedience impracticable. The most that tyranny can do,—and tyranny in this case means exactly what folly and wickedness put together mean;—the most that tyranny can do, is to make men dissemble their belief, or punish them for the avowal of it, which is about as wise, and merciful, and just, as it would be to punish them for seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching."

Sheffield Iris, for May 18th, 1819, on the Catholic claims.

It is now eight years since the above remarks were published; and our sage Legislators still punish men for their belief, and are still "about as wise, and merciful, and just, as if they were to punish them for seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching!"

How hard is it for some people to learn!

Obituary.

THE LATE REV. G. B. WAWNE.

At Bridport, on the 13th of April, the Rev. G. B. Wawne, Pastor of the Unitarian Congregation of that place. For this afflictive bereavement, those who were around Mr. W. were in a great measure prepared. Since the commencement of the present year, he had been rapidly declining, and during the last fortnight of his life experienced so much weakness and debility, as to render any thought of his recovery hopeless. On the day preceding his decease, he felt himself very languid, and

this feeling was considerably increased by an attempt which he made to transact some business of importance. About ten o'clock in the evening, he retired to his bed-room, apparently much exhausted. When laid on his pillow, which proved to be his dying pillow, he observed, "it has nearly come to a close." A friend, upon hearing these words, remarked to him, that if it even were so, he knew it was *all well.* "O yes!" he replied, "God is very gracious." He then took a little beverage which had been prepared him, and soon afterwards sunk to rest. It was evident that he was rapidly advancing to the confines of the eternal world; and the following day realized this solemn event. In the morning it was perceived that a great change had taken place,—the beautiful temple was in ruins. He spoke a little but it was in a faltering voice, and in a manner which indicated that the time of his departure was at hand. When an attendant had rendered him some assistance in enabling him to change his position, and given him something to moisten his lips, he said,—and it was spoken in a tone of voice which evinced that he felt what he expressed,—"well, I am very thankful to the Almighty for the gracious manner in which he has supported me during my long illness,—I think as my afflictions increase that my patience becomes greater to bear them." And now the painful time arrived, when the tongue which had frequently charmed with its discourse, should charm no more. Soon after he had uttered the above words, which shew how well the Lord had "tempered the wind to the shorn lamb," he became speechless, and also totally insensible to all that was passing around him. In this, to his friends, distressing situation, he continued until nature ceased her strife.

A wish which he had frequently expressed during his indisposition, viz. that he might pass the boundaries of mortality in peace, was *all graciously* fulfilled. He expired at mid-day, without a struggle or a sigh; indeed it may be said, he *languished* into life."

> "The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
> Is privileg'd beyond the common walk,
> Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heav'n."

Thus terminated the mortal career of one whom all who knew him must deplore. Seldom does the grave enclose a treasure so rich as that which has lately been consigned to it. An individual so practically wise; so kind,—so circumspect,—so faithful in all good works, is not every day severed from the world.

The remains of this estimable christian, were committed to their kindred earth on Wednesday the 25th of April, in the presence of his congregation, his brother ministers in the district, and a vast concourse of spectators. Many were the tears which hallowed his grave, and many the hearts which confessed that society had lost one of the most affectionate of friends, and the

church of Christ one of the most faithful of Pastors. On the following sabbath, a friend in the ministry paid the last tribute to departed worth, by preaching a Funeral Sermon. It was a discourse worthy of the *living* and the *dead*. His text was very happily selected from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, "I have fought a good fight, &c." This discourse, it is expected, will be published in the course of a few weeks.

Mr. W. declared, that he experienced much peace and joy in believing in those doctrines which are called Unitarian. To the friend, before alluded to in this account, he expressed himself thus: "is it not strange, that there should be so many persons found in this enlightened age, who believe so implicitly in the popular doctrine of the atonement, the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the elect? At a time like this, when I am turning my thoughts in every direction, I do assure you, that the truth of the Unitarian doctrine seems to shine out more and more clearly!" This declaration, which was made about ten days before his decease, is a sufficient refutation of that oft-repeated assertion, "that Unitarianism cannot impart consolation in a dying hour,—that it is a religion which will not do to die by."

We see in this event, the necessity of working while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

We learn also the importance of Christian principles, and the walking circumspectly in all holiness and righteousness. O, it was a happy death! There was a peculiar sacredness—a divine serenity resting over it. May those who read this account, finish their course with the same sweet peace and holy hope! But let them remember, that if they would die the death of the righteous, they must live his life.

MR. THOMAS CALDWELL.

On Friday, May 17, at Manchester, in the prime of life, Mr. Thomas Caldwell, Druggist, formerly a member of the Unitarian Congregation, now meeting in Hunter Street, Liverpool. This young man, feeling himself unwell went to repose himself in the afternoon, for an hour or two, and when the servant went to call him; he was found dead on the bed. And to add to the melancholy event he was to have been married to a young Lady in Liverpool, in a very short time.—How precarious is life! Who can tell what a day may bring forth. The day which was expected to be crowned with gladness, will bring with it woe; and nothing is left to the widowed maid, but the recollection of the virtues and the affection of him she loved.

POETRY.

CONTEMPLATION.

How sweet it is to leave th' eternal peals
Of stunning sound, thro' mighty cities hurl'd,
To roam where nature sways an untrod world,
And where no mortal voice upon you steals.
There, fill'd with thoughts of Him who rules the sky,
I'd sing, while Echo with her hundred tongues
Should swell to deepest thunder all my songs.
And roll with arrow-speed the sounds on high.
Then on the rock of contemplation fix'd,
I'd gaze with rapture on the queen of night
Drowning the argent host in floods of light,
While her bright beams with ocean's blue waves mix'd;
And, thrill'd with ecstacy, I'd pour my soul
In silent praise to Him who form'd the whole.

Yes, thou tyrannic monarch! mayst inhume
Thy haughty nobles or thy foot-stool slaves
In cells of darkness and in wave-lash'd caves,
Where they may mourn till death, and curse their doom;
But canst thou, king! appal with iron chains
The martyr of his faith? He scorns thy links
Which sever him from earth, and fondly thinks
On God, and heaven, where bliss immortal reigns.
Say, then, he's thrall'd, yet still in thought he's free,
Free as the tempest, and can fly thro' earth,
Can mingle with the saints in harmony,
And give a thousand dearest objects birth;
Can to his sight elysian views unfold,
And gild his stygian den with scenes of gold.

J. G.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Summary of Unitarian views commenced in the present, and which will be continued through the two succeeding numbers, is recommended to the serious attention of our readers.

The length of the article of Obituary has obliged us to postpone some matter we had intended for the present number.

We must beg our friend Ragland to wait for his concluding letter; the same also of the author of "A Plea for the distressed." With several other friends we will bring up our arrears as soon as possible.

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AND

THEOLOICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

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COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from page 135.)

The Epistle for Christmas Day.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne O God is for ever and ever."

That this passage should be translated thus, "God is thy throne for ever and ever," is evident from the words which follow—"God, even thy God; hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;" for if Christ had been God, he could have had no being as *his* God; much less could he have had fellows, and been anointed, and exalted. Supposing the term *God* to be retained, it is to be understood in the same sense in which "Moses was a God to Pharaoh," and "they were called Gods unto whom the word of God came."

The Gospel, St. John, i. 1.

Here again it may be observed, supposing Jesus Christ is the Word, that he may be God as Moses was God, and as prophets were Gods. *(See Improved Version.)*

The following ingenious remarks from the Monthly Repository, may be thought to throw some light on the subject. "The word was *as God.*' Pronounced by him through a medium, it was to be regarded not merely as spoken by himself, but (in scripture phraseology) as himself. Pretty bold, it may be said, and rather free with the original. But is such a latitude to make sense of a passage unexampled or unauthorized? Take the following in 2 Samuel xxiv. 23. "All these things did Aramah, *as* a king, give unto the king." The word *as* is in

italics, supplied by the translators, to make sense of the passage: Aramah being no king, but a wealthy subject of David.—It is possible also to make nonsense of a passage by a literal translation unexplained; e. g. 'The word was *with* God, and the word *was* God.' This occurs in the context, and a more eminent example it would not be easy to cite. So, ought not Matt. xii. 50, to be rendered, 'whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is *as* my brother, and sister, and mother?'—If I be told, that this and a multitude of similar passages are always understood and rendered in this sense,—be it so! and does not consistency require the same principle of construction to elucidate John i. 1.?

I am inclined, however, to think that this chapter proves the Word and Jesus Christ to be distinct, without having recourse to either of the above explanations. The 14th verse says, that "the word was full of grace and truth." The 17th verse states, that "the law was given *by* Moses, but grace and truth came *by* Jesus Christ." The former verse, represents the word as the fountain whence grace and truth spring. The latter, represents Jesus Christ as the channel through which they flow. Is the channel the fountain? And, moreover, Jesus Christ is a mediator exactly on the same principle as Moses was. Grace and truth came *by* the one, as the law was given *by* the other. Was Moses the *source* whence the law proceeded? Neither then was Jesus Christ the *source* whence grace and truth proceeded. They are both strictly *mediators;* and Jesus Christ must be as distinct from the word, as Moses was distinct from Jehovah; or there is no correctness in the parallel which the Evangelist here draws.

The lesson, however, in the Book of Common Prayer goes no further than the 14th verse; consequently, this striking parallel is not permitted to meet the attention of those who engage in the Church Service. But the Scriptures in the Church Service are read "by piece-meals, bits and scraps," and are strangely "mangled and curtailed."

Christmas Day.

"Christmas is of popish origin, as the name *Christ-mass*

imports, the *mass* on the 25th of December being in honour of Christ. This feast was established by the usurping, tyrannical church of Rome in the fourth century, 350 years after the death of Christ." Sir Isaac Newton traces the origin of Christmas Day to a heathen festival,—the nativity of the sun; which christians, in order to accommodate their religion to the taste of the heathens, applied to the nativity of "the sun of righteousness." *(See Christian Reformer, Vol.* I. p p. 458- 462.)

In the Collect for this day, Christ is said to be the only begotton Son of God, and at the same time, *one* God, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. That is, God is his *own* only begotten Son—Son to himself, and Father to himself.

Good Friday.

As Churchmen particularly notice Good Friday, and consider that day a sacred fast, it is necessary to observe, that it is a fast never enjoined by either Christ or his apostles, and that it was introduced some time after the death of the eldest apostle. Let every Protestant then reflect, whether he is not acting inconsistently with his principles, in observing a religious fast unauthorized by the scriptures. Should it be said, that there can be no objection to the keeping of Good Friday, any more than commemorating the death of a friend; I say in reply to this plausible argument, that by parity of reasoning, Catholics may be justified in keeping their numerous saint days. When men once begin to introduce annual religious fasts and festivals, they know not when they will stop. They may go from little to more, till at last religion may consist of mere useless observances and ceremonies, while the more weighty matters of the law may be thought little of, or neglected. The history of the church in the dark ages, is a sad confirmation of this assertion.

In the first Collect for this day, Christ is said to have suffered death upon the cross, yet that he now liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever *one* God, world without end. It is not clear from this, whether he was God before his crucifixion, or merely after. If before, as Trinitarians would contend, then "let none say, that we misrepresent the doctrine

of the atonement, the primary and essential idea of which is, *the public execution of a God*, for the purpose of satisfying justice and awakening a shuddering dread of sin."

(*Dr. Channing.* "*The superior tendency, &c.*" *p.* 33.)

The third Collect for this day, is peculiarly beautiful for the spirit of devotion and love which it breathes, and justly merits a place in these Commentaries. It is as follows; "O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels and Heretics; and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end Amen." Saving the trite conclusion "Who liveth and reigneth, &c," this Collect is either a reproach to the Athanasian Creed, or the Athanasian Creed is a reproach to it.

To be continued.

A PLEA FOR THE INJURED.

"Think ye that they on whom the tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all the Galileans? I tell ye nay."

SIR,

The Clergy of the Established Church, in various pulpits in Lancashire, have been proclaiming to their auditors, that the existing distress is a divine judgment, inflicted on the poor, as a punishment for their sins. This charge is brought by ministers of the gospel of Christ, and against thousands of the working class, who are suffering from poverty and wretchedness in the extreme; who, with all their toil of fourteen or eighteen hours a day, are not able to obtain more than the sad pittance of 3s. or 3s. 6d. per week! It is difficult to say, from what motive such a charge could proceed, or whether the injustice or inhumanity of it be the greater. I feel it, however, to

be my duty, to stand forth the advocate, though perhaps, the feeble advocate, of the unfortunate and the injured. And I am persuaded, Mr. Editor, that, with such an appeal to your benevolence, you will readily afford me a place, for this purpose, in your useful Publication; though, from the nature of the subject, I shall be led to touch upon topics, not altogether appropriate to the general character of your work. But the claims of justice are paramount to all other considerations; particularly, when demanded by those who are unfortunate and in distress.

Without further preface, therefore, I proceed to put in my plea in behalf of the accused.

That there are many among the poor deeply sinful, I am constrained with grief to admit;—many who live as without God in the world,—lost to religion, and sunk in immorality and vice. But are the poor the only sinners in Britain? or sinners above all them that dwell in Britain. Look to the higher classes—to those who have received the advantages of a liberal education, and who should set an example to the poor. Are not great numbers among them greatly sinful? do they not manifest a most lamentable want of the sense of religion? do they not live in the violation of God's holy commandments? and do they not lavish in dress, and splendour, and luxury, those bounties of God's Providence, which ought in part at least, to be appropriated to works of benevolence? Nay, look into the bosom of the church itself, and the most sacred connexions of the Church. A writer in the *Examiner* of the 1st of April, says, "This is the season of Lent—a season set apart especially for abstinence, and fasting, and humility, and repentance, and a closer attention to the duties of religion; and what do I see? To commence with the "Fathers in God," gaudy and splendid equipages!—a devotion to political controversies in public—in private, the festive board laden with the delicacies of the season, and a style of Eastern luxury, the most exquisite cookery, and wines of the most intoxicating and bewitching flavor—wives, sons, and daughters, arrayed in the most costly costume, and perfumed like bouquets, giving and attending fêtes, routs, and balls, operas and plays, and, as it were as a salvo of conscience, the

oratorio; while from every corner of the nation is heard the cry of poverty, misery, and woe!"

And taking a more general survey of religious professors, how many are there, who, under the garb of sanctity, make gold their God, gain their religion, and self their creed? How many who scruple not to accumulate fortunes, by oppressing thousands of their fellow-creatures down to poverty and wretchedness?

Why, then, are the poor selected, as the only victims of God's judgment, when there are such vast numbers equally sinful with themselves; nay, perhaps, much more sinful, as they have received the superior advantages of a liberal education? Why were not pride, and selfishness, the love of money, and the misappropriation of the blessings of providence by great numbers among the rich, dwelt upon, as deserving a divine judgment? Why especially, as a christian nation, our love of war?—that scourge of the human race—that disgrace to the christian name! Here there might have been good reason, as well as a fine field, for declaiming upon divine judgments; and it would have been much more just and generous, than to select the feeblest of the sufferers, in this wide-spread distress.

But it is exceedingly presumptuous, in any case, to pronounce what are divine judgments, and what are not. It is something like prying into the councils of heaven, and hurling the thunderbolts of Omnipotence against the sinful, or supposed sinful, race of men. What is the criterion, by which these judges of mortals, determine in these cases? How do they distinguish between divine judgments, and divine blessings? How do they know what is intended as a punishment for sin, and what as the promoter and perfecter of virtue? We are told in the Scriptures, that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." It is said of our saviour himself, that "he was made perfect through suffering." And we are assured, that "our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Suffering, then, in the present state, is no criterion of sin. This is as clearly taught in the Scriptures, as if it were written with a sun-beam. "It is a strong argument," says Addison,

"for a state of retribution hereafter, that in this world, virtuous persons are often unfortunate, and vicious persons prosperous; which is wholly repugnant to the nature of a Being who appears infinitely wise and good in all his works, unless we may suppose that such a promiscuous and undistinguished distribution of good and evil, which was necessary for carrying on the designs of Providence in this life, will be rectified and made amends for, in another." (Spectator. No. 483.) As an instance and illustration of this, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus may be mentioned. The present is not the scene of rewards and punishments, but of trial, and let no one presume to judge things before the time, or to interfere with the prerogative of the only Lawgiver and Judge.

But these sacred interpreters of heaven's judgment, in order to establish their position, should have proved that the poor are the only sufferers at this time. But is this the case? No, far from it; the distress is felt by great numbers besides themselves. We are told, that "when Diagoras the Atheist was on board one of the Athenian ships, there arose a very violent tempest: upon which the mariners told him, that it was a just judgment upon them, for having taken so impious a man on board. Diagoras begged them to look upon the rest of the ships that were in the same distress, and asked them whether or no Diagoras was on board every vessel of the fleet." (Spectator, No. 483.) Thus, a somewhat similar appeal may be made in the present case. The distress is not confined to one particular class of society, but extends in some respects through all. Are all, therefore, this one guilty class of working people; and this one class all the rest? If not, why is this distress a divine judgment in the one case, and not in the other? Let the Clergy answer it to God and their own consciences.

It is somewhat remarkable, but perfectly characteristic of the Clergy, that when the numerous banks fell a short time ago in rapid and frightful succession,—not a word did we hear from the clergy, of the calamity being, a divine judgment, to punish the bankers for their sins. No, they were as silent as death: there was no sin in this case, and consequently no divine judge-

ment. But when the distress extended to the working class—the poor weavers, the case was completely reversed; it was then all sin, and all judgment, and nothing else. Oh, what flagrant partiality, what selfish time-serving, does such conduct display! The poor are visited with divine judgments, because they are poor; the rich are not visited with them, because they are rich. Or poverty and sin are identified on the one hand; and wealth and purity on the other. It is no longer, therefore, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven;" but "how hardly shall they that have *poverty* enter into the kingdom of heaven." A worldly hierarchy possesses wonderful powers of transformation; and "it is wise," it must be admitted, "in its generation." But it might be well, if it would remember who has said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

(To be concluded in our next.)

A SHORT SUMMARY OF UNITARIAN VIEWS.

(Continued from page 128.)

Sec. IV. *Concerning the Scripture.*

We believe in the truth of Scripture, and use it as our only guide in religious matters.

1. By Scripture we mean the books of the old and new Testaments, commonly named the Bible. These books were written at various times and by different persons, each of whom had a style and mode of writing peculiar to himself. The contents of these books may be divided into historical, biographical, doctrinal, moral and prophetical. Not that these subjects are treated of separately but rather introduced according to the natural order of events. Some of these books are more ancient than any other now in existence, and yet possess stronger evidence of authenticity than such works as the commentaries of Cæsar, or the Annals of Tacitus. Indeed, some of the ablest defenders of the truth and authenticity of scripture have been Unitarians, such as Lardner, Priestley, Wakefield, and many others.

2. Though we believe in the authenticity of scripture, yet a regard for truth obliges us to add, that in almost every book, of which Scripture is composed, there are various errors existing in

the original. There are errors of omission and interpolation, errors of transposition and errors of grammar. These have been fully proved by the labours of Houbigant, Kennicott, De Rossi, Griesbach and others. The lapse of ages, and the ignorance or carelessness of transcribers, have been the principal causes of these variations; and they are just what we might expect to find in writings of such antiquity. Let it then be observed, that our faith in the authenticity of scripture refers to a correct and pure text, and not to the errors mentioned.

3. We greatly admire the English common version of the Bible, and venerate the ability and piety of the translators; but with these admissions, there is no man of sense but who will acknowledge that there are various errors, and some important ones, in the common version as used in England. These errors may be attributed to the following causes. 1. The translators had not the same means of using a correct, original text as exist at present. 2. Most of them were rigid Calvinists and, consequently, had their judgments warped by their system. 3. Even if they had been ever so enlightened and impartial, they were obliged, in several cases, to sacrifice truth to the commands of a bigoted tyrant.(*) The Unitarians have made an attempt, in their Improved Version of the New Testament, to correct some of these errors; and though they have executed their task with great ability and impartiality, they have been treated with considerable obloquy and reproach. The truth is, some have raised an outcry against the Improved Version, because it is too faithful a transcript of the original, and therefore unmasked some popular views which have hitherto been supported by the errors of the common Version; and others have joined in this persecution because the Improved Version did not proceed from themselves nor from their own party.

4. With regard to the inspiration of scripture, we do not think with some that the influence of heaven led the writers to the choice of words and expressions as well as ideas, nor with others that every idea in the Bible was penned under a supernatural agency, whilst that the writers were left to adopt such modes of

(*) Vide King James's rules in Boyse's life of that Monarch.

expression as suited their own convenience. If a divine influence governed the writers in the adoption of language as well as ideas, then that influence exercised different tastes of composition at various times. The second opinion seems to be equally incorrect. The spirit of inspiration is never given unnecessarily; and certainly the greatest part of the Bible does not appear to require more inspiration to write it than common abilities, good sense and a due regard to truth. The parts which demanded a spirit of inspiration were those truths which the sages of antiquity could not discover by the exercise of reason alone, and the several prophecies which are interspersed through the volume. Should some zealous advocate for universal inspiration refers us to 2 Tim. iii. 16, where Paul is made to say, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, &c." we reply, the apostle never intended to convey such an idea. His words, when correctly translated, are,—"And all scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, &c." This is widely different; and whilst it clearly proves that some parts of scripture were not of divine inspiration, it states that those parts which are from God are most profitable for the human race. Besides, the apostle refers to the Old Testament only; the New Testament was not then written, with the exception of some epistles which Paul had penned under particular circumstances for the benefit of individual churches.

5. We take the scripture for our only guide in religion, because we believe it to contain a revelation from God; because the truths contained in that volume are the most important and interesting that can engage the attention of mortals: because we know of no other authority so high; and because various sects departing from this authority and adopting oral traditions and the silly creeds of councils, have lapsed into great errors and follies, and retarded the progress of truth and righteousness. In all our reasonings upon religion, our constant motto is,—"to the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them."

Sec. V. Concerning Jesus Christ. (*)

We believe that Jesus Christ was a man like unto his brethren; that he received a divine commission from heaven to preach the gospel and to perform the miracles recorded; that he died by violence, rose again, and ascended into heaven; that he is the mediator between God and man; and that he will appear again to judge the human race according to the appointment of heaven.

1. It is distinctly stated that Jesus Christ was like unto his brethren, but he could not possibly be so if he were either the supreme God, or a super-angelic being. Jesus Christ performed the functions of a man, appeared as a man, and was considered as such by all his friends and followers. In opposition to this view, the account of the miraculous conception is urged against us by our opponents. To this we reply,—history proves that several attempts were made in early times to thrust forgeries into the sacred page, and we consider the story of the miraculous conception to be one of these for the following reasons. 1. The style of the writing is quite different from the genuine histories of Matthew and Luke. 2. The account, if true, must be very important, yet it is mentioned by only two Evangelists at the commencement of their histories: no other writer

(*) Many of the remarks in this section apply exclusively to us as humanitarians, and not to our Arian brethren. The latter are as much Unitarians as ourselves in a belief of the Divine Unity and in worshipping one God only to the exclusion of all inferior beings; but they differ from us in believing in the pre-existence of Jesus Christ and some other things of minor importance. Though their reasons, for these things, appear unsatisfactory to us, they are conclusive to them; and amidst their diversity of opinion, we rejoice in the cordial union which subsists between us, and which, we trust, will never be violated. So long as we agree to worship one God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our differences of opinion upon minor points will be of little consequence. If we differ in sentiment upon some subjects, we shall debate these matters like genuine Christians, and never cease to admire, esteem and love each other.

or speaker in the New Testament takes the least notice of it. This silence is most extraordinary, if the account be really genuine. 3. The appearance of the star, and the journey of the Eastern sages to Jerusalem must have been matters of public notoriety and astonishment throughout Judea; yet every other public writer, whether sacred or prophane, is silent upon the subject, whilst several of them are very full and explicit upon other subjects of far inferior interest. 4. The account itself offers a violation to the laws of nature, and that without any necessity. Doubtless God can suspend the general laws of nature but this is never done without a sufficient cause; and in this case we see no real or just cause why they should be so altered or suspended. 5. The dreams of Joseph, the flight into Egypt, the massacre at Bethlehem, &c., carry the appearance of fable, and agree better with the views of the monks of the 10th century, than with those of such sober historians as Matthew and Luke. 6. This account is accompanied with a false genealogy which the greatest erudition and acuteness of learned men are unable either to understand or to reconcile. 7. The Jews who were the enemies of Jesus Christ said many bitter things against him both whilst he was alive and after his decease, but with all the untruths which they uttered, they never charged him with illegitimacy, but constantly represented him as the son of Joseph and Mary. The modern Jews, however, affirm that he was illegitimate, and they ground this assertion upon the story of the miraculous conception. Those who were the contemporaries of Christ would, we have no doubt, have said the same thing, if they had heard of such a story; but as they are totally silent upon the subject, it is fair to conclude that it was unknown in their times that it was never written by the Evangelists; but that it was subsequently invented and foisted into the New Testament as a pious fraud, just in the same manner as the stories which exist about the origin of Achilles, Eneas and other heroes of antiquity. Some zealous but ignorant christian may probably exexclaim, what! do you make Christ nothing but a man? a mere

man? We answer, no; not a *mere* man, for we join with an apostle in believing "Jesus of Nazareth to be a man *approved* of God among you by miracles, wonders and signs which God did by him." If this answer be deemed insufficient, we despair of giving any which will prove satifactory.

2. We are firmly persuaded that Jesus preached the truths ascribed to him, aud performed the miracles mentioned by the Evangelists; and we think that there is as much authority for this belief, as for the landing of Cæsar in Britain, or the actions ascribed to the Duke of Marlborough. It seems to us equally clear that Christ *derived* his glorious information and divine powers from the Father, because he himself has distinctly stated so, and has ascribed all his doctrines and powers to his Father and God. He must then be inferior to the Father, and necessarily dependant upon him.

3. That Jesus Christ died by violence is admitted by all parties, and that he rose again from the dead is equally clear; and and it is worthy of remark that the brightest views which Unitarians have of the resurrection of the human race are founded upon the resurrectiou of Jesus Christ. We say with the apostle, "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain....but now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

4. It is said, with reference to Christ that "because he despised the shame and endured the cross, therefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every other name, that *in* the name of Jesus, (not *at* as our version falsely says) every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Jesus has, therefore been *appointed* as Mediator between God and men; and hence we read that "there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." On this account God is said to be in Christ reconciling the world to himself, Agreeably with these views the apostles and early christians addressed their prayers and praises to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, but never to Christ, unless he were present

either in person or by vision. As Unitarians we embrace these sentiments and follow these examples. We never pray to Christ, because we have no authority for doing so, but we direct all our praises and prayers to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. We are of opinion that any praise or prayer offered to Christ in the present day is idolatry; and we exceedingly disapprove of Christians praying to God to grant them such and such blessings *for Christ's sake*, as such phraseology has no proper meaning, and is unsupported by true scriptural authority.

5. We believe that Christ will appear again to judge the world, because the scripture expressly says so, many have asserted that if Christ be only a man, it will be impossible, in the nature of things, that he can judge the world. To this we reply, there is no one so fit to judge the human race as one who partook of the frailties and feebleness of humanity; and since we are told that Christ will reappear by the order and appointment of God, we may rest assured that the grand Appointer will invest him "with the proper qualifications, and enable him to judge righteously. God is fully able to do this; and as clear intimamations are given in scripture that he will effect this design, it is not for us to question his capabilities.

Sec. VI. *Concerning the Holy Sprit.*

We do not believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit.

1. The phrases Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost, and Spirit of God are all considered to be synonymous, or as meaning the same thing; and in the popular creeds, they are applied to the third person in the Trinity, which is said to be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and Son, and as worthy of divine honours.

2. We are of opinion that such phrases as the above do not refer to personality in the Deity, but entirely to the *influence* of our heavenly Father, in whatever manner that influence may be imparted. We have not adopted this opinion hastily, but after a serious, and, we trust, impartial investigation of all those passages of scripture where such phrases occur, as well as others which refer to the same subject.

3 Many modern divines seem to abandon the defence of the doctrine of the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit, and to leave it to its fate. At least we have observed, with regard to several, that whilst they stoutly defend the Deity of Christ and the modern notion of an atonement, they say little or nothing about the Deity of the Holy Spirit. This silence probably arises from an internal consciousness that the doctrine is indefensible, and that most of those texts of scripture, where allusion is made to it, ought to be construed with reference to the influence of the Almighty, whether that influence manifest itself in a great wind as mentioned in Gen i. 1; or in communicating divine powers and instructions, as in the case of the apostles on the day of Pentecost; or in that peace and happiness which Christ promised to his faithful followers. John 14, 15, and 16. (*)

Sec. VII. *Concerning Original Sin.*

We do not believe that the sin of Adam was either imputed or imparted to his posterity, and consequently that no infant deserves to perish on account of Adam's trangression.

1. An apostle has defined sin to be a transgression of the law, and this definition we believe to be correct. Now, as sin is a transgression of the law, it follows that there must not only be a law in existence, but that law must be known before sin can be committed. Again, we are assured that the soul that sinneth shall die; but a mere infant, or even child, cannot sin, because it has not faculties to understand the law. Further, nothing is said in scripture about the imputation of original sin, but a positive declaration that "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father;" it follows therefore that the imputation of Adam's transgression is a nonentity, and that no child deserves punishment on that account.

(*) Vide Marsom on the impersonality of the Holy Spirit, a tract which abounds with manly reasoning, and which has never, as far as the writer has heard of, been answered.

2. Jesus Christ has set the question at rest by representing little children as fit models of purity, and by declaring that of such are the kingdom of God; but this he never would have done, if such are really born in sin and deserve damnation. To us, this argument seems conclusive, and shows the extreme folly of believing and propagating the silly nostrums of the schoolmen respecting the antichristian notion of original transgression. The truth is the notions of original sin and its imputation to posterity, were not known in the christian church before the time of Augustine, bishop of Hippoo; and as it is supposed that this Carthagenian debauchee invented them as apologies for his own crimes.

(To be concluded in our next)

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

THE celebrated Abbadie attempts to prove the real Deity of Jesus Christ from his being called in the Book of the Revelation, "The first and the last;" for he says, "this was a title applied by the ancient prophets to none but the Supreme God as a title peculiar to him and incommunicable to all others."

In the book of the Revelation, where this appellation, "*first and last*" is given to Jesus Christ it is qualified by terms which can by no means apply to the Supreme Being. Rev. i. 17, 18, "I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and *was dead*; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen." Now, is there any one of the advocates of the Deity of Jesus prepared to say, that the Supreme Being was *ever dead?* Until this be done, the point is not proved by the application of the terms "first and last" to Jesus of Nazareth.

ALPHA KAI OMEGA.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Anniversary of the Methodist Unitarians.

On Thursday, June 7th, was held at Padiham, the annua meeting of the different Societies of Methodist Unitarians in Lancashire. In the Morning, a very interesting discourse was delivered by the Rev. F. Haworth, of Rochdale, from Acts xxviii. 22. After the services at the chapel, the Friends in number 120 retired to an Inn and sat down to a plain dinner. The utmost harmony and christian feeling pervaded the meeting. The business of the Association was afterwards transacted in the chapel, the Rev. N. Jones in the Chair. We were happy to hear that most of the Societies and Sunday Schools connected with the Association are in a flourishing state.

The Friends again assembled for divine worship in the evening, when a very excellent Sermon was delivered by Mr. Jones, from the words of the Apostle, "If any man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he decieveth himself." After service the Frinds separated to their respective homes, fully satisfied with the proceedings of a day devoted to the moral and religious improvement of man.

PROVINCIAL MEETING.

The Annual Provincial Meeting of Unitarian Ministers, &c., of Lancashire and Cheshire was holden at Warrington, June 21. In the Morning, the Rev. C. Wallace preached a very argumentative discourse, from 1 Tim. ii. 5. in which he ably advocated the primitive doctrine concerning the person of Christ. A numerous party sat down to dinner at the George Inn. We were pleased to observe that the members of the Provincial have resolved to make that Association more active and useful, by incorporating with it the Missionary and Tract Societies, which will render it more efficient in the promotion of scriptural truth.

The next annual meeting, will be held at Paradise Street Chapel, Liverpool.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

On Thursday, June 7th, the aniversary festival of the Unitarian Association was held at the London Tavern in Bishopgate-street; on which occasion Mr. G. W. Wood of Manchester was unanimously voted into chair.

After the usual loyal toasts had been drunk, subsequently to *Non nobis Domine* being sung, the chairman said, that the next toast that he was about to propose, was one that had long been a standing toast among Protestant Dissenters.

"Civil and religious liberty all over the world."

The toast being drunk, the CHAIRMAN said that he had been requested to announce, that a Petition to both Houses in unison with the sentiment which he had just toasted had been prepared, and that it is now lying in the room for signatures from such gentlemen as might be willing to subscribe it; and as it might be interesting to all to know its contents, he would reqnest Mr. Edward Taylor to read it to the Company.

Mr. E. TAYLOR then read the Petition; which we shall insert in our next Number.

"The British and Foreign Unitarian Association."

This toast was drunk with loud cheers.

The Treasurer, JOHN CHRISTIE Esq. said, that in connexion with the toast which they had just drunk, he would say a few words relative to its funds, for the satisfaction of the Meeting. The present was the first anniversary of this Association, which united in itself all the former Unitarian ocieties, and by which means it was expected that more good might be done than by keeping them separate. With respect to their finances, they had received various sums from the Unitarian Fund and Civil Right Association, and a valuable stock of books from the Unitarian Book Society; so that, at present, their funds and property were in a most promising condition; and he had no doubt that he should be able to announce, in the course of the evening, that the funds had derived a still further augmentation from the bounty of those gentlemen who were present.

The CHAIRMAN begged to propose the health of his friend on his right hand, the Rev. Mr. Kenrick, with many thanks to him for the excellent discourse which he had given them this morning.

Rev. Mr. KENRICK begged leave to return his most sincere thanks for the kind and flattering manner in which they had drunk his health. He could truly say, that no one could be better convinced than he was himself, of his own deficiency in many material points necessary to grace the cause which he had undertaken to advocate; but he nevertheless held it to be a part of a Christian's duty, however humble his talent, to comply with the demand made upon him, lest he should bring on himself the imputation of being a slothful servant in the vineyard, like that one, who, because he had but one talent, would not trouble himself to lay it out to his master's advantage. Under this conviction, he had undertaken the

task imposed upon him, though he felt that it had been imperfectly executed in his hands, and it was to their kindness that so favourable an opinion of his services had been formed; but though he felt his deficiency in this, he would yield to none present in the firmness of his attachment to, or in his strong persuasion of, the final triumph of Unitarian principles. In the distant situation in which his avocations placed him, it was only in his power to co-operate remotely; but he could assure the meeting that whenever it was within his compass to aid the cause, they might rely on his most zealous support.

The CHAIRMAN said, that the next toast which he had to propose, was an old standard with the Society;

"The memory of our departed worthies."

Drank in silence.

Mr. WOOD then begged to propose the health of his friend on the left, a younger, but not less zealous advocate of the Unitarian cause; he proposed

"The health of Mr. Taggart, and thanks to him for his excellent discourse of yesterday evening."

Rev. EDWARD TAGGART said, that he had been unexpectedly called upon to offer the best services in his power, but as he was unaware that such a demand would be made upon him, he had been wholly unprepared to meet it in such a manner as to do it that justice he could have wished. And on the present occasion, though his experience had made him somewhat better acquainted with the pulpit than with a seat so near the Chairman, yet, he should not be doing justice to himself, should he let slip the present opportunity of telling the meeting how entirely devoted he was to the Unitarian cause. He could not, however, but lament, that his being called upon arose from the absence of other ministers more able than himself, in consequence of which, the choice had fallen on one so incompetent to support it. He would have been glad to have seen more of their brethren from distant parts rallying round them in the support of that standard, near which the staff of Unitarianism was to be found; but though some were deserters, he was happy to find that there were many who yet held fast to the faith; and, with respect to the absence of the others, he was inclined to adopt the sentiment of King Harry, who, when Westmoreland wished that they had more men in their distresses, said, "No, good cousin, if we are to die, there are enough to do our country's work; and if we live, the fewer there are, the more the honour." If, then, the Unitarians, as some say, are going headlong to perdition, they surely could not wish to have others united with them; but if they were really pursuing a system likely to lead to a better arrangement of things their paucity of numbers should only make them the more staunch and

firm. The present association naturally asked for support from all the ministers of its persuasion; indeed, it was certainly entitled to claim the support of every Unitarian throughout the country; for when any should ask its ministers what were its objects, and what it was doing, it would be enough to put into their hands the Report of last year, and still more the Report that would emanate from that meeting. Such services as he was able to render, either here or hereafter, were entirely at the command of the Association; their religion was not to be considered as the religion of a Belsham, or a Priestley, great as those men were, but as the religion which was to be found in the pages of the New Testament, the religion of life eternal, of the living God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he had sent among us for our salvation.

The CHAIRMAN said, that his next toast was one which had lately excited a good deal of discussion; he meant,

"The Test and Corporation Acts."

And he was glad to perceive that the Protestant Dissenters were beginning to rouse from the lethargy in which they had so long been wrapped to express their feelings on the subject. In what had been said on the previous day, he heartily concurred. He hoped that the question would not again be abandoned, till the rights of conscience were fully conceded.

The CHAIRMAN then gave;

"The healths of Lord John Russel and Mr. J. Smith, and a speedy Repeal to the Test and Corporation Acts, which were a scandal to the conscientious churchman, and a dishonour to the nation."

Mr. BOWRING spoke at considerable length; he thought that no time should be lost in attempting to effect the repeal of these abominable Acts. The lateness in the month, and the preparations already made, prevent our giving the speeches of Mr. Bowring, Mr. Aspland, and Dr. Rees, in our present Number, but we shall present our readers with as copious a report of them as we are able in our next.

The CHAIRMAN said, that his next toast was the health of a gentleman, who, much to his regret, was absent through indisposition; he meant the Rev. Mr. Fox. For himself, he had not the honour of more than a very slight acquaintance with that gentleman, but he was well known to most of the company present; and he should, therefore, not attempt an eulogium on the character of a man, who at all times had been the eloquent and intrepid defender of Unitarianism. He proposed,

"The health of the Rev. W. Johnson Fox, with the best wishes for the restoration of his health."

Mr. CORDELL returned thanks in Mr. Fox's name, and in thanking the

campany, begged to inform them that the last accounts of that gentleman's health were most favourable, and that there was a prospect of no great period of time elapsing before he would be able to resume his professional duties, and give the advantage of those talents which he so eminently possessed, to that cause in which he had laboured as assiduously, and perhaps as successfully, as any man now alive. Some of the former friends of the Association had in the course of the last year seceded, and others abandoned the cause: and therefore it occasioned additional regret that the health of Mr. Fox had been such as absolutely to preclude his activity. He, (Mr. Cordell), however, felt convinced, that the cause in which they were all engaged, would not fail. Truth was the great weapon to which they trusted for success—truth was a celestial weapon, and though it might be wielded by weaker or stronger hands, yet he felt assured that it must ever go on and prosper.

Rev. Mr. MARDON of Maidstone, said, that he would not leave the room without declaring, that whatever inconvenience might arise from the illness of some, and the secession of others, it was nevertheless his firm conviction, that Unitarianism was the doctrine of the Gospel, and would stand as long as Christianity lasted; it was a religion founded on a rock against which not even the gates of hell would be allowed to prevail. The preacher who had addressed them that morning, had pointed out in forcible language the difficulties against which they had to contend; after which he thought that the wonder would not be that they had not made a greater progress, but that they had made so much. It was one of their peculiar misfortunes to have to contend against various kinds of opposition, so that now the spirit of persecution was withdrawn, and that the enemy could not have recourse to this method, there were other courses adopted more secret, and consequently more fatally hostile. There was one simple fact, which had lately occurred in Kent, which would illustrate this; a Bible Society was formed there, the object of which of course was to circulate the Holy Scriptures, and nothing beyond; and yet, when a clergyman had been applied to, to take the chair, he had made it an express condition that no Unitarian ministers should be allowed to address the meeting. The rumour of this getting abroad, the Unitarians thought themselves called upon not to remain silent; and accordingly agreed on making a stand; the consequence of which was, that no less than three Unitarians, of whom himself was one, had been appointed members of the committee, and it remained with them, if the same clergymen should take the chair at any subsequent meeting, to let him know that they were Christians as well as he.

The CHAIRMAN begged to propose,

"The health of their Treasurer, Mr. Christie; and he felt great pleasure in the remembrance, that it was through his instrumentality that he (the

Chairman) had become, about twenty years since, a member of that branch of the present Institution, the Unitarian Fund."

Mr. CHRISTIE returned thanks. At one time he had certainly devoted much time to the Society, but since a deputy-treasurer, had been appointed, that gentleman had engaged so actively in the Society's business, that his office was little more than a sinecure. The principles of Unitarianism had lately made a rapid progress. Twenty or thirty years ago they were scarcely able to get together thirty gentlemen on an anniversary meeting, while now he saw around him six or eight times that number. In America the same rapid progress had taken place, and in Boston alone there were not at present less than twelve or thirteen Unitarian congregations; and in India the same principles were daily obtaining fresh disciples; much of which might be attributed to the Unitarian Society for distributing Books, and the Unitarian Fund. By the concentration of these societies he trusted that additional good would be done, for there was now a wide field open for them to act in; and with the work once set in motion, he hoped that they would not be obliged to make a pause from the want of funds. They had the advantage of a most judicious and discreet committee, and their exertions were such as to extend their influence on all sides. To their present Chairman, likewise, they were much indebted, not only for his services on that occasion, but through a long series of years, during which he had advocated the cause of religious liberty and of Unitarian doctrine. He, therefore, begged to propose

"The health of Mr. G. W. Wood."

The CHAIRMAN said, that his services had been much overrated. He had been induced to take the chair from a feeling which had been pointedly alluded to by a rev. gent. near him, that every Christian was bound to contribute his talent, however humble, when called upon, in a Christian cause. As a stranger he had a claim upon their indulgence, and he trusted that in whatever respect he might be found wanting, it would be made up by their own zeal and energy. His own opinion was, that there was the strait-forward path of prosperity open before them; and though in former times much had been accomplished by individual exertions, it remained for the present age to see what could be effected by voluntary associations. He begged to propose,

"The workmen and their work; the health of Mr. Adam, and the other Missionaries at home and abroad."

Mr. ARNOTT returned thanks in Mr. Adams's name, and said that he had lately received a letter from Calcutta, by which it appeared that Rammohun Roy had gained a litigation, in which he had long been engaged

and that consequently he would now be able to re-enter the field with redoubled activity and zeal. Mr. Adam was likewise highly successful in his undertakings; and with the efforts such men as these, added to the goodness of the cause, it might be no vain thing for him to say, that he trusted no very long period of time would elapse before the truth of pure religion was established from the jungles of Bengal to the wilds of America.

The CHAIRMAN then proposed to the company, that they should drink the health of the Secretary, Rev. Mr. Aspland.

Mr. ASPLAND returned thanks. We shall give a pretty full report of his speech in our next.

"The Manchester College, York,"

Was next proposed by the Chairman.

Rev. J. KENRCIK returned thanks. It had been asked, why the York College had not called itself Unitarian. He could answer, it was not because the supporters of it were indifferent to Unitarian sentiments, but because such a designation might lead to the supposition that it received none but students holding those sentiments. They meant to hold it out as an Institution open to all parties, with full liberty of conscience. The London University professed to be established on the principle of no religious tests; but this was no new innovation. The Manchester and the Warrington Colleges, among the Presbyterian Dissenters, had acted on the same principle more than half a century ago. He hoped the example would be followed by the other Universities. He knew nothing more strange than these restrictions; they were restrictions unknown to foreign universities.

The health of Mr. BOWRING was next proposed, and that gentleman shortly returned thanks. Until the health of the late Secretary was re-established, he would undertake the office, and endeavour to do his duty.

"The London University, and may the doors of the temple of science never be closed by narrow-mindedness and bigotry."

Mr. HILL, in returning thanks, expressed his sitisfaction that such an Institution was rising in the metropolis. He concurred in the propriety of conveying knowledge, without requiring a declaration of religious belief. It is important that Unitarians should take the lead in endeavouring to break such shackles. Nothing could be more absurd, than to require subscriptions from boys, to articles which it was impossible they could fully understand. He was attached to the Society he was then addressing, because it was friendly to liberty; and should at any time consider it an honour to render it in his profession any assistance in his power.

Mr. R. TAYLOR said, he should not have risen if he had not thought that

the Unitarian body had done less than any other for the London University. He considered this a great stigma upon them. When all classes, Jews and Christians, had laid aside their differences and animosities to carry on this design, it must be a cause of regret that Unitariaas had done so little. He hoped, every member of that body would lend his aid, and take shares in the Institution.

The health of the Rev. Dr. Rees, the Book Secretary, was next proposed.

The Rev. Dr. Rees returned thanks, and expatiated at considerable length on the connexion that had always existed between the progress of literature and the progress of Unitarianism we are under the unavoidable necessity of deferring the report of this speech to our next.

The health of Rammohun Roy was next given.

M. Buckingham returned thanks, and gave a short sketch of the history, and passed a high eulogium on the character, of Rammohun Roy.

Mr. Aspland said, that he was sorry to interfere in the arrangements of the chair; but as their marriage-bill was now before parliament, and agitated in the house that night (at least it was no fault of theirs if it was not,) he would propose a toast which he was sure would be cordially received;

"Our young men and maidens; and may the time soon arrive when they may plight their hands, the emblem of plighted hearts, without a violation of the dictates of conscience."

Mr. R. Taylor being loudly called for, said, that he could no longer be considered a young man.

A Gentleman replied, that a man was generally considered young till he was married.

The thanks to the Chairman having passed, the meeting broke up after having enjoyed an intellectual treat.

Just as we were going to press, we received from a friend "The World,"—we shall attend to the particular part in our next.

THE UNITARIAN MARRIAGE BILL.

The Bill in favor of the Marriage of Unitarians, without subjecting them to the form used by the established Church, has passed the House of Commons without a division. It has been read a second time in the House of Lords, and was to go into a Committee on Tuesday Evening, June 26th.—Lord Eldon, as usual, will use all his influence against it.

For Correspondence See Cover.

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THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 32. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* AUGUST 1, 1827.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

Easter Day.

We hear nothing of Easter till the second century. "Eastre is the name of one of the Anglo-Saxon Goddesses, whose festivities were celebrated in April, which thence obtained the name of Eastre-Month. Her name is still retained, to express the season of our paschal solemnity, and thus the memory of one of the Idols of our ancestors will be perpetuated as long as our language and country continue." (Bede's History. See Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. ii. p. 15.)

Christmas Day, Good Friday, and Easter Day, have no other origin than human invention; and no other sanction than human authority. Dissenters, therefore, or those who acknowledge the Scriptures as their only standard of faith, and Christ as their only master in religion, have strong reasons for disregarding them.

Robinson, of Cambridge, sums up the point thus: "The history then in brief is this: neither Good Friday, nor any other fasts or feasts, were appointed to be observed by the Lord Jesus Christ, or his Apostles. The time of Christ's birth cannot be made out, and that of his crucifixion is uncertain. Could we assure ourselves of the year, we could not prove that the Jews observed the regressions of the equinox, nor that they made use of accurate astronomical tables. No traces of Easter are to be found in the first century, nor for a great part of the second. When the first observers of it appeared, they could not make evidence of their coming honestly by it. Councils decreed that it should not be kept before the 21st of March, nor after the 20th of April. Some however kept it on the 22nd of April, while others celebrated it on the 25th of March; others, at times different from both, and others kept no day at all. Our ancestors murdered one another for vanity of opinion on this subject; but we are fallen under wiser and better civil governors, who will allow us to think and act as we please, provided the state receives no detriment; so that the language of Scripture is spoken by the law of our country. *He who regardeth a day, let him regard it to the Lord; and he who regardeth not a*

day, to the Lord let him not regard it." (See History and Mystery of Good Friday.)

It ought not to be passed over unnoticed, that the Church-of-England Translators of the Received Version, have given a false rendering to a word, in Acts xii. 4, as if to uphold one of their observances at all events. In this verse, the word translated *Easter*, should have been rendered *Passover*; as the Greek word *Pascha* is so translated in every other instance. "This measure has too much the appearance of a pious fraud upon the unlearned, or rather upon the unthinking part of the readers of the new Testament. The Passover was, as we all know, a great Jewish Festival; and the Translators would not, in this solitary instance, have departed from the true rendering of the word "Pascha," had it not been to give something like scriptural authority for a custom, a festival of human appointment on which Scripture is totally silent, and for which History gives us no evidence till the second century." (See "A Dissenter's Reasons for not observing Good Friday, and Christmas Day. By James Hawkes.")

"I take up Good Friday," says Robert Robinson, "where I find it, as a part of the established religion of my country, and I modestly inquire the authority that made it so. A few old women refer me to the fourth verse of the xii. ch. of Acts for the word *Easter*, and I return the compliment by referring them to their grandsons at school, who say Luke wrote *Passover*. I could, were I inclined to revenge, be even with these old ladies by telling the tale of Lady Easter, Ashtar, or Ashtaroth, a Sidonian toast: but I am too busy and too placid now, and I take my leave of this goddess, and also of the godly translator, who profaned a Jewish fast by nick-naming it after a pagan prostitute, and laid the blame on innocent St. Luke." (See Robinson's History and Mystery of Good Friday.)

It would be wrong too not to observe, that there is, apparently, a growing partiality among Unitarians to hold their public Meetings on Good Friday. As recent instances, I may mention "The Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society." and "The Somerst, Gloucester, and Wilts Unitarian Misionary Association." Is this practice a wise one? It may perhaps be replied, that it is more convenient to meet on that day, than on any other. But it should be remembered, that the numerous Christian festivals, at present observed, were at first established by a too-accommodating spirit on the part of Christian Professors, to heathen rites and customs. It was convenient to erect the one upon the foundation of the other, as it might be most congenial to the prejudices and tastes of the Heathens. And hence, "the simplicity that is in Christ," is in a great measure lost, amidst a multiplicity of observances. And Christians may thus learn, that if they would guard against the greatest devia-

tions from Christian purity, they must guard against the least (See Worsley's Lectures, p. p. 140—143.)

In the service of Easter Day, we have the following striking words; "in that he (Christ) liveth, he liveth *unto* God." And yet, he is declared to *be* God. He who lives *unto* God, is *God* himself! To be *devoted* then to a king, implies that we *are* that very king. Irreconcilables cease to be such in the Church of England.

We meet also with the following strange accompanyment.

"For as in Adam all die; even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

"*Answer.* As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen."

It is difficult to say, what ideas, or whether any, church people attach to such a jumble of Scripture and human inventions.

PURGATOR.

To be continued.

A PLEA FOR THE INJURED.

(Concluded from page 160.)

"Think ye that they on whom the tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all the Galileans? I tell ye nay."

SIR,

We have seen the presumption, the impiety, and the folly, of attributing this distress to a divine interposition. Let us now see to what it may reasonably be attributed.

What, then, is the cause of this distress? The primary cause is the national debt. This renders heavy taxes necessary, in order to pay the interest: these, in their turn, produce high prices in provisions. As our burthens are thus generally oppressive, we want high prices for our manufactures, in order to bear them. But we cannot get high prices. Other nations are not so heavily taxed as we are; and, consequently, we cannot meet the foreign manufacturer in the market; he can greatly undersell us. Now here comes the conflict. What is to be done? The prices of our manufactures must fall; and, consequently, wages must be reduced. But taxes and provisions have arisen, in proportion as wages have decreased. The working people, then, are losing on every side. And hence their deep distress—their poverty, their want, their wretchedness, their misery.

If the merchant and manufacturer have reduced their profits, in proportion as wages have been reduced, they have acted fairly and equitably. If they have not—if they have thrown the whole weight of the burthen upon the working class, how will they answer it at the bar of God? But even supposing they have

taken their just share of the burthen, it is clear that distress must arise from such a state of things; and this distress is to be attributed, primarily, to the national debt.

The question, then, here arises,—How was this debt contracted? By, or in consequence of, our numerous, expensive, and antichristian wars—those wars which are a direct violation of the spirit of the Gospel, and a scandal to the nation calling themselves *Christian*.

And who have been the advocates of these wars—the reproach of the Christian name, and the entailers of misery upon mankind! Among others, and, perhaps, the foremost, the Clergy: to the shame of what is called their Sacred Order be it spoken. They have ever proclaimed that they were "just and necessary"; and they have ever vindicated the levying of our numerous taxes for their support. And, as though this were not sufficient, they have even displayed the ensigns of war in their temples, dedicated to the honour of the Prince of Peace!

They have, therefore, though not intentionally, been instrumental in producing the *cause* of the distress, and, consequently, *the distress itself*. And yet they say, It is a divine judgment, to punish the poor for their sins! And this, too, at the same time that they are wringing one-tenth of the produce of the land from the people; and that the Church is possessed of the enormous property of upwards of TWO HUNDRED MILLIONS! How shocking, to be instrumental in producing so much misery, and under such circumstances, and then lay it to the charge of God!

But "they know not what they do." They have acted from the pernicious influence of a worldly Hierarchy, which perverts their better feelings, and infatuates their minds. And to this must we attribute their selecting the poor, from the mass of British subjects, to be the solitary victims of a divine judgment. None but the Clergy of an earthly Establishment could have been guilty of such cruel injustice, and such daring presumption. Oh, that the eyes of the people were opened, that they could see the real character of all such Establishments, and the grievous evils which they inflict upon mankind!—how they convert religion into a mere political engine, corrupt its purity, dishonour its name, and retard its progress—address the most sordid passions—tend to make the Clergy worldly and selfish—inspire pride, bigotry, and intolerance—sacrifice the rights of conscience, and violate religious liberty—produce animosity and ill-will among the different denominations of religious professors—discourage free inquiry, contract the mind, and prevent the advance of human improvement and the happiness of mankind. Oh, that people could open their eyes to see these things! and seeing, would no longer support institutions so injurious to their welfare!

In conclusion, I would say in particular to those who are bowed

down by this appalling distress,—Remember the divine example of the Saviour of the world; remember his precepts of mercy, forgiveness and love. Bear in mind, also, that judgment belongs alone to God; that "he executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed;" and that "he will hereafter render unto every one according to his deeds." And let me entreat you earnestly to leave yourselves and all your concerns, to his righteous disposal. He will do what is just. He will vindicate his ways to men. He will assert his authority, and maintain the cause of the poor. And bear in mind, too, that the present is only a preparatory scene—that it is intended to fit you for another and a better; and that shortly all your trials and sufferings will be over. And then, if by "well doing," you have "sought for glory, honour, and immortality," "all tears will be wiped from your eyes." "The wicked will cease from troubling, and the weary will be at rest." Then will be the day—a glorious day—a day of joy and rapture, and never-ending bliss.

JUSTITIA.

UNITARIANS AND DEISTS.

NO. V.

"Some of the Unitarians are now showing their intimate relationship with the Deists, by receiving them into their churches.—So we learn from the Monthly Repository, the organ of that body."

New Baptist Magazine, August, 1826.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

The last of W. J.'s positions which I shall notice is expressed in the following words:—

"I honor Jesus as a moralist and a reformer, beyond any other name which history has transmitted to us, not excepting Socrates himself. And I think it possible to account for the supernatural parts of his history, without supposing that he performed or pretended to perform, the miracles ascribed to him, and even without impeaching, in any considerable degree, the character of the first promulgators of christianity."

I would ask can W. J. do this? Will he do it? I call upon him to do if he be able. Indeed I think the man who makes such an assertion, cannot acquit himself of the duty he owes to society, if he does not at least attempt to remove from their minds, the delusion under which they have so long laboured. And if he should effect his purpose he will entitle himself to the character of a reformer, and mankind ought to hail him as a benefactor of his race. But W. J. should recollect that the crown is not be-

stowed until the victory is obtained; and that he who buckleth on the harness is not to rejoice like them that putteth it off.

To say that Jesus did not perform miracles, and that he did not pretend, i. e. did not tell the people that what he performed was beyond the effort of human power, is to stamp the character of the evangelists as false reporters, as infamous deceivers, and that of their master, as an impious impostor.

W. J. has carried his disbelief further than the Jews did in the time of Jesus. They hated Jesus but it was without a cause—they did not deny that he wrought miracles, but they ascribed the operation to infernal agency. They acknowledged on more than one occasion, that mighty works had been done by him. Jesus appealed to the miracles he wrought as the proof of his mission. And when Peter appeals to his countrymen, respecting the miraculous character and works of Jesus; he appeals as a man who knew he could not be contradicted; he appeals to their own knowledge as to facts; and *was not* contradicted, see Acts ii. 22. Had W. J. heard Peter on this occasion he would doubtless have told him, that there was no necessity to appeal to miracles to establish the supernatural history of the reformer of Nazareth, that could be done without supposing that he ever worked miracles or even pretended to do it." This I confess would be like an attempt to account for the mathematical character of Sir Isaac Newton, without supposing that he ever solved a problem in geometry, or ever pretended to know any thing about the properties of lines and angles. I leave the application to W. J. himself.

I have now finished my remarks on W. J's. communication, and if I have mingled any thing like severity in the same, I beg to assure him, it is not from any personal feeling, nor with the least intention to hurt his mind. My sincere prayer is, that the best blessings of heaven may rest upon him, and that he may soon return to that source of consolation which the gospel affords.—I am Sir, Yours,

JOHN RAGLAND.

USEFUL MAXIMS.

WHAT can be more honourable than to have courage enough to execute the commands of reason and conscience—to maintain the dignity of our nature, and the station assigned us? To be proo against poverty, pain, and death itself, so far as not deny any thing that is scandalous or sinful to avoid them? To stand adversity under all shapes, with decency and resolution? To do this is to be great above title and fortune. This argues the mind

of an heavenly extraction, and is worthy of the offspring of the Deity.

A man of virtue is an honour to his country, a glory to humanity, a sitisfaction to himself, and a benefactor to the whole world: he is rich without oppression or dishonesty, charitable without ostentation, courteous without deceit, and brave without vice.

The most laudable ambition, is to be wise; and the greatest wisdom is to be good. We may be as ambitious as we please, so we aspire to the best things.

In the morning think what thou hast to do, and at night ask thyself what thou hast done.

At the day of judgment, thou shalt not be asked what proficiency thou hast made in logic, metaphysics, astronomy, or any other science; but whether thou hast lived according to thy nature as a man endued with reason and morality.

A good conscience is to the mind what health is to the body: it preserves a constant ease and serenity within us, and more than countervails all the calamities and afflictions which can possibly befall us.

There is far more satisfaction in doing, than receiving good. To relieve the oppressed, is the most glorious act a man is capable of: it is in some measure doing the business of God and Providence, and is attended with a heavenly pleasure, unknown but to those that are beneficent and liberal.

'Tis true greatness that constitutes glory, and virtue is the cause of both: an unworthy behaviour degrades and disennobles a man more than birth and fortune aggrandize and exalt him.

Sincerity is, to speak as we think; to do as we pretend and profess; to perform and make good what we promise; and really to be what we would seem to appear to be.

By reading we enjoy the dead, by conversation the living, and by contemplation ourselves: reading enriches the memory, conversation polishes the wit, and contemplation improves the judgment. Of these, reading is the most important, which furnishes both the other.

What are honour, fame, wealth, and power, when compared with the expectation of a being without end, and a happiness adequate to such an existence? How poor will these things seem at our last hour; and how joyful will that man be who hath led an honest, virtuous life, and travelled to heaven, though through the roughest ways of poverty, affliction, and contempt.

The sum of christianity or morality is, "give, and forgive; bear, and forbear."

FILIAL TENDERNESS.

The three sons of an eastern lady were invited to furnish her with an expression of their love, before she went a long journey. One brought a marble tablet with the inscription of her name; another presented her with a rich garland of fragrant flowers; and the third entered her presence and thus accosted her: "Mother—I have neither marble tablet, nor fragrant nosegay, but I have a HEART. Here your name is engraven, here your memory is precious; and this heart, full of affection, will follow you, wherever you travel, and remain with you, wherever you repose."

A SHORT SUMMARY OF UNITARIAN VIEWS.

(*Concluded from page* 160.)

Sec. VIII. *Concerning an Atonement.*

We do not believe in the doctrine of the Atonement.

1. Orthodox divines are not agreed among themselves either what they mean by an atonement or how far it extends. Some assert that the shedding of Christ's blood fully appeased the wrath of God, whilst others declare that it only placed man in a state for receiving salvation. One party affirms that the atonement was made when he hung upon the cross, whilst another maintain that it was effected during his agony in the garden of Gethsemane. A third party are positive that the atonement was made for the sins of all the human race, and a fourth as strenuously restrict it to the elect, whom they say God had chosen from eternity to be heirs of salvation. Amidst such jarring opinions we have surely a right to pause, and to say to those who wish to make us believe in the truth of a doctrine which they declare to be essential—Please to agree amongst yourselves both as it regards its nature, its extent, and also as to the time when it was effected.

2. The word atonement occurs only once in the New Testament, and then it means reconciliation, not of God to man but of man to God; hence it is said "by whom we have received the

atonement or reconciliation." This was the opinion of the late John Wesley, and adopted in his translation of the New Testament. Should we be referred to the atonements made under the Levitical dispensation as typical of the atonement said to have been made by Christ, we answer, the cases are not parallel. Atonements were made under the Jewish economy only when persons had been guilty of the non-observance of some part of that singular ritual, but when any *moral offence* had been committed, there was no atonement, bnt immediate punishment fitted to the offence. If atonements had been offered up for moral offences, then the allusion to the Mosaic practice would have had some weight in the argument; but as it is notorious that no atonement was offered up when the moral law was affronted, and that the atonements made referred solely to ceremonial offences, nothing can be legitimately drawn from these Jewish practices that will apply to the modern orthodox doctrine of an atonement.

3. The common view of an atonement proceeds upon the supposition that God, or at least his justice, was angry with the human race, and would neither be pacified nor forgive the offender without either his death or a vicarious sacrifice, which must be equivalent in value to the offence committed. But this doctrine disagrees with the statement as recorded in the New Testament, which represents our heavenly Father as most merciful and benevolent, and as so loving the world as to send his only beloved son into it, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish but have everlasting life. God, then, was not angry with the world, but on the contrary, loved it with truly paternal affection.

4. The popular doctrine of atonement is decidedly at variance with the most explicit statements of scripture which represent salvation as emanating directly from the free grace of God, and not from any vicarious sacrifice. Paul distinctly asserts that we are saved by grace. If salvation, then, be by grace, there can be no atonement. The one is totally incompatible with the other, and cannot be reconciled with it; therefore, we feel no hesitation in abandoning this doctrine, preferring rather to follow Christ and his apostles.

5. In reasoning with the orthodox upon this subject, the writer has often been asked, "if you reject the doctrine of atonement, upon what ground do you expect to be saved?" Our reply is—*by the free grace of God as manifested through Jesus Christ.* This is the glorious basis upon which we rest our hopes of mercy and salvation, and we think it infinitely preferable to the self righteousness of the Pharisees, or to the vicarious sacrifice or atonement of orthodox christians.

Sec. IX. *Concerning Conversion and Santification.*

We believe that both conversion and sanctification are

necessary, and that both are effected by the influence of truth upon the mind, the heart and the conduct.

1. By conversion we mean a change from ignorance and vice, to knowledge and virtue; and by sanctification we understand the purifying of the temper and disposition, so that we may be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of Man at the last day, and enter upon the possession of that eternal and perfect felicity which God has prepared for virtuous characters.

2. Both conversion and sanctification are necessary and even indispensable, because they are so strongly urged upon our attention by Christ and his apostles. All parties admit this truth and it is pleasing to reflect that whatever may be our differences upon other points of doctrine, we all inculcate the absolute necessity of a change of heart and conduct, and of purity of mind.

3. Our friends, the Methodists, assure us that both conversion and sanctification are instantaneously effected, and thousands among them pretend to tell us the day, and the hour when they were converted and sanctified. They also affirm that those changes are produced by the miraculous influence of the spirit of God operating upon their minds and hearts in a manner which is inexplicable, but something similar to those divine communications which were made to the apostles on the day of Pentecost and at other times. To these views we reply, 1. History proves that it is dangerous to trust in *frames* and feelings; and it is well known that many of those who speak so positively of these sudden and miraculous changes, are persons of weak and uncultivated minds, but of strong passions. 2. We have no proof of divine communications from heaven, being made to man, since the days of the apostles. Then indeed, such communications were necessary, and the apostles, by the miracles which they performed, proved their reality; but when the gospel was fully preached and churches formed in different countries, such miraculous influences ceased, and it seems, to us at least, very presumptuous for any person in the present day, to affirm that he is moved by any divine influence instantaneously and miraculously communicated. 3. Impartial investigation and sound experience prove that conversion and sanctification are not, generally speaking, effected instantaneously but gradually and in a progressive manner. 4. The only agent that we know of in the conversion and sanctification of man, is truth. Paul declares that the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two edged sword, separating the sinner from his sins; and Jesus Christ prays the Father to sanctify his disciples by his word, for his word is truth. Supported by these unerring authorities, we are of opinion that the truth of the gospel is the great and energetic cause of conversion and of sanctification. By its energies the mind is enlightened, the heart changed, and he affections fixed upon things above.

Sec. X. Concerning a Virtuous Life.

We believe that a virtuous life and conversation are indispensable; that such are acceptable to the Almighty; and that they afford the best proofs of our attachment to the grand truths of Christianity.

The justness of this view is so clearly stated in the scripture' and so fully believed by all parties, that it would be useless to attempt any proof or illustration. We may however, observe that no view of christianity appears more conducive to virtue than Unitarianism, as one charge against Unitarians, is their insisting so much upon morality. By way of contrast it may be remarked that modern orthodoxy does not seem to lay such stress upon the practice of virtue, as we see exemplified in its operations upon great criminals who upon being detected in crime, are tried, condemned and executed. Such have been guilty of the greatest crimes, and have continued hardened even during their trial; but the moment they are condemned and find that they have only a few hours to live, they send for an evangelical clergyman. An instantaneous change seems to take place; they become, at least in their own estimation, new creatures; and just on being turned off, they tell the spectators that they are washed in the blood of the lamb; that they are sure of going to heaven; and that in a few minutes they shall be in the arms of Jesus!!! Far be it from the writer of this Essay to cast any reflections upon the sincere piety of the clergyman who may visit such unfortunate beings in their last moments, or to presume to limit divine mercy. The clergyman may be really sincere in the advice he gives, and God is unquestionably most merciful; but it appears very presumptuous for such characters to speak so confidently of their immediate entrance into a place which the scripture informs us is to be the abode of the virtuous and the just, and it is also very unfortunate for the morals of those spectators who hear such sentiments. They cannot fail to produce a laxity of morals, and to operate as incentives to crime.

Sec. XI. Concerning the Head of the Church.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the Christian Church, and that we ought to bow to his authority alone in religious matters.

1. When disputes arose among the disciples of Christ, respecting who should be head, chief or master, our Lord's answer was, "call no man master upon earth, for one is your

master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Jesus Christ not only asserted this, but he gave the most indubitable proofs that his religion was purely spiritual; that all who really believe him are his disciples; and are all equal; and that he is the only legitimate head of the christian church. Does then a patriarch of Constantinople, a Pope of Rome, a King or Queen of England, or a Presbytery in Scotland, claim a right to be head of the christian church? Do any or all of these call themselves nursing fathers, or nursing mothers of the church? We modestly ask, where are your credentials? Until these be produced, we affirm without fear of successful contradiction, "One is our master, even Christ, and all we are brethren;" and this forms one grand reason with us for dissenting from all established forms of religion.

2. History says, that when Henry VIII. threw off the Pope's Supremacy, he preferred an indictment against the whole body of the clergy in Westminster Hall, and obtained judgement upon the statute præmunire. By this decision they were all declared to be out of the king's protection, and to have forfeited all their goods and chattels. Having reduced them to this dilemma, his majesty thought proper to pardon them upon two conditions; first that they should pay into the Exchequer the sum of £118,840; and secondly that they should yield his majesty the title of supreme head of the Church of England. The money was soon paid down, but considerable demur took place with respect to the second demand, and some very weighty things were said upon the subject. At length, they sent his majesty word, by a noble lord, that they would acknowledge him to be head of the church, as far as was agreeable with the word of God. Enraged with this answer, Harry stamped with his foot and replied, that he would have none of their "as fars" and "so fars," but that it must be done. Terrified with this threat, they complied. Since that period we have had various characters upon the British throne, and each in his or her day, has been a most gracious and religious king or queen, head of the church, and defender of the faith.

Sec. XII. *Concerning the state of the Dead.*(*)

We believe that man, at his death, will remain in the grave until his resurrection.

1. The idea of man being a compound being possessing body

(*) This section, like one preceding, contains some remarks which differ from those which are advocated by our brethren the Arians. They are inserted here, not with any intention of offending this respectable body, but with the design of exhibiting a consistent, though concise, summary of our religious principles as humanitarian Unitarian Christians.

and soul, seems to have had its origin in the false philosophy of the heathens, who wishing for immortality, and ignorant of the doctrine of the resurrection, invented the idea of a compound being, according to which the shadowy, immaterial part was to survive death, and range through Elysian fields with fabled heroes and demi-gods. Such persons, upon becoming acquainted with christianity, brought their old prejudices with them, and contrived so to infuse these notions into the minds of Christians, that they are now generally and most religiously believed as truths of the first importance. (*)

2. The idea of man being compounded of body and spirit is at variance with the noblest views of true philosophy and anatomy. We know that all the nerves centre in the brain, and in proportion as the latter is perfect or otherwise, thought is either vivid or dull. The mind increases in energy as man grows up to years of maturity, and generally sinks into decay as the body is influenced by old age and its attendant infirmities. (†) If the brain receive a concussion, the mind is either destroyed or injured; hence we conclude that thinking depends upon the organization of matter, and not upon any immaterial principle implanted within us. Surely, the good Being who reared us from the dust, can so organize our frames as to endue us with capabilties for thinking without the aid of a spiritual principle; and we know that all the ideas we possess have been derived from external objects acting upon the senses. None of them are innate. Besides what is this spirit? Has it really even been seen, heard or felt? Can any one define it? If we have such a principle, and if thinking be a proof of it, then all other animals as well as men have it also; for they all think and reason, and are all capable of great improvement, by the aid of education. It is true that the faculty of thought is not as great in brutes as in men; they have, however, a sufficiency for their respective situations, and for the purposes of their creation. We are aware that many name this faculty by the term *instinct*, but this word is only a cloak for ignorance and would, if duly analyzed, be found to have the same signification as reason.

3. The idea of man having a spiritual, undefined something distinct from matter, is not supported by real scriptural authority. We are aware that the words *spirit* and *soul* frequently occur in the sacred page, or at least in our common version, but the original words both in Hebrew and Greek, refer to wind or breath, or to persons as breathing animals, or as endowed with the power of breathing. They are never used in the scripture, with reference to man, as bearing any clear allusion to an immaterial and immortal principle. This has been clearly shown

(*) Vide Priestley's Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit, and his Controversy with Dr. Price.

[†] Vide Hartley on man, Vol. I.

by Bp. Law, who has, with great ability, examined, collected and arranged every text of scripture, in which such words occur. (*)

4. The idea of man being compounded of body and spirit or soul, and that the latter goes either to heaven or hell immediately upon death is opposed to many explicit statements upon record in the New Testament. Both our Lord and his apostles declare that man is to enter into happiness or to sink into misery at the day of judgement. If however the orthodox idea of an intermediate state be correct, man enters upon either happiness or misery immediately at death: upon this hypothesis a resurrection and a future judgement are unnecessary, man is judged when he dies, and is either rewarded or punished according to the deeds done in the body the moment life is extinct. Now, as both these statements cannot be true, we give the preference to scripture authority and say that man is really what he appears to be, and will remain in the grave until the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised. Should any person refer us to Christ's answer to the penitent thief, when he said, "this day shalt thou be with me in paradise," we reply that these words can only apply to a cessation from temporal suffering including, perhaps, a hope of future happiness, for it is evident that Jesus did not literally enter into paradise on that day. After his resurrection he said, "touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my God and to your God."

Sec. XIII. *Concerning a Resurrection and a Future State.*

We believe in an universal resurrection, when every one will be rewarded or punished according to the deeds done in the body.

1. There is nothing in nature analagous to the resurrection of man, and all attempts to prove such analogy are unsatisfactory. We ground our hopes of a resurrection from the dead upon the following reasons. 1. God is able to raise the dead. 2. Jesus Christ and his apostles have distinctly stated that the dead are to rise. 3. Christ has fully substantiated the truth of this doctrine, by his own resurrection, and given his followers an undoubted proof and pledge that they also are to rise and enter into new life and consciousness.

2. We firmly believe that at the period of the resurrection, a general judgement will take place, when every one will be rewarded or punished, not according to his earthly rank, power, riches, nor even faith, but according to the deeds done in the body, whither they are good or evil. This is clearly stated in the New Testament and must be admitted by all religious sects and parties professing the christian religion.

[*] Vide appendix to Bishop Law's Considerations.

3. By many (*) it is believed, that punishment will not be eternal but awarded according to the deeds done in the body, and will be continued so long as vice shall remain. The principal reasons are, 1. Though sin, is sinful, it is not infinite; punishment, therefore, will be limited, or in proportion both in severity and duration to the turpitude of the crimes committed. Justice demands this, and this only; to proceed farther would be unjust and tyrannical. 2. Because God is a merciful and benevolent being, and his object in punishing the wicked seems to be correction not destruction. It is therefore, rational to conclude that after just and judicious chastisements are inflicted, sin and evil will be destroyed, and death be no more. Opposition and misery will be annihilated; all fallen creatures will be restored to honour, purity and happiness; the benevolent designs of heaven will be accomplished; and then will Jesus Christ deliver up his reign and his kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may become all and in all. (†)

CONCLUDING REMARK.

In colloquial discourse and even in some popular written works we often hear and read such phrases as the following: "Catholic religion," "Protestant religion," "Calvinistic religion," "Unitarian religion," and the like. Such phraseology is very incorrect and often prejudicial. Suppose ten men were called upon to view a grand and beautiful landscape. They would, doubtless, all agree that it was grand and beautiful; but owing to the different positions in which they stood, the force of their respective educations, and the various degrees of strength or weakness in their optical nerves, they would differ in opinion respecting the light and shade in the landscape they examined; would it be right in any one to assert that the others viewed different landscapes? Would it be proper for another to exclaim, that they viewed *no* landscape, because they varied in their sentiments from him respecting certain trials or appearances? Or would a third be justified in condemning and persecuting all his neighbours because they presumed to dissent from his sentiments and to judge for themselves? (‡) Certainly not. Let us

(*) The Unitarians are not all agreed upon this interesting subject, nor are these benevolent views peculiar to us, as numbers both in the Methodist New Connection, and among the Calvinists adopt and warmly support the same principles.

(†) Among many interesting works upon this subject, the writer particularly recommends Scarlet's Translation of the New Testament to the consideration of the reader.

(‡) When Dr. De Launoi of Paris presumed to censure Thomas Aquinas, the Dominicans were enraged and vowed vengeance, A friend said to De Launoi, "You have disgusted the Dominicans, they will all draw their pens against you;" but the Doctor replied, I dread their penknives more than I do their pens. All violent coercive measures are done away with in this country, (thanks to our civil rulers,) but it must be acknowledged that too much of the leaven of persecution still remains against conscientious dissentients.

apply this to religion. We all admit that God has spoken to us by Jesus Christ; we revere the communications made, and publicly profess our faith in their divine origin, but owing to various circumstances over which we have no control, we differ in opinion respecting the signification of certain parts. What then should we do amidst these difficulties? Common sense will tell us that we ought to examine and decide for ourselves; and that leaving the dissentients to the judgement of our heavenly Father, we ought to show them all possible kindness and christian charity, and thus keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.

HERETICS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR,

LAWS were anciently made against Heretics, by those who called themselves christian rulers, of a most fantastical nature, and often originated in whim and caprice. The following anecdote is in point, and may instruct some of your readers how to judge of those who have been extolled as defenders of the faith.

We are informed, though somewhat differently by different writers, all of whom agree in substance, that heretics abounded in the reign of Theodosius, and particularly Arians were very numerous. The emperor could not be prevailed on by his spiritual counsellors to suppress them by law. One day the bishops went to court to pay their respects to his imperial majesty. His son Arcadius sat by him. There went among the rest a simple rude old bishop, named Amphilochius. He was not remarkable for any kind of knowledge except that of the trinity, in which he was deeply versed: nor for any feelings except those of zeal for orthodoxy. When he was admitted into the emperor's presence, he saluted his majesty as his brethren had set him an example, but he either took no notice of the prince, or behaved rudely to him. Theodosius was offended, and ordered him to be turned out. What! exclaimed the old man, are you affronted, Cæsar, because I did not honor the son, as I honoured the father! Assure yourself Almighty God abhors such blasphemers as do not honour his only begotten son as they honour him. Theodosias was so struck with this wonderful discovery that he applauded Amphilochius, issued an edict to suppress the Arians, and all the orthodox boasted of their colleague, and gave God the glory.—*See Robinson's Ecc. Researches.*

Your's

ALFRED.

SERVETUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

The following quotation from Dr. Sim's Treatise on "The unpublished Discoveries of Servetus," may be interesting to your readers; the insertion will gratify your constant reader,

PHILO.

A sincere love of christianity beams forth in every page of the work I have before me. *(Chris. Resti.)* His great anxiety was to restore religion to the purity, which he believed it had lost. The doctrine he opposed was not that of Christ; it was that of the churchmen, who had established in his name, their own vain and fleeting opinions. The best proof that Calvin and Melancthon had deserted the mild, the charitable, the peaceful religion of truth; and that they followed not the precepts of their great master, was and is, that they pursued even unto death, a helpless, poor, and learned man. His life and all connected with his hapless fate have often been the subject of the pens of learned and ingenious men. A few have done him justice, whilst others have heaped upon his name either calumny or contempt. The article in the Historical Dictionary, by M. de Chauffpie, called, "the life of Servetus," has been the source of most of the accounts that have been written. His prejudices against him are violent, and most certainly unwarranted by the authors he cites. And even the quotations have but one end, not that of gaininig truth, but proving the absurdity and extravagance of opinions, some of which have since received the sanction of experiment and reason.

The second volume of the *Bibliotheque Anglaise* contains a very interesting life of Servetus, and in the first volume are the extracts relating to the circulation, taken from Douglas, But it was Mons. D' Artigny in the *Memoirs des Hommes Illustres*, who extracted the history of the trial from the archives of the Abrick of Vienna in Dauphine.

I have lately read, with considerable pleasure, an Apology for the Life of Servetus by RICHARD WRIGHT. Not because he adds any thing to our previous knowledge of his life and conduct; but that a spirit of candour and liberality entitles the volume to much consideration. He has evidently not met with the *Christianismi Restitutio*, nor does he clearly state the religious opinions of Servetus; that I am willing to confess, is a task of no small difficulty.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

In our last we gave a copious account of the proceedings of this Association on the Thursday; we have since been favoured with an account of the Wednesday's proceedings, which we now give, according to our promise in our last number.

The second Annual Meeting of the Subscribers of this Association, was held on Wednesday, June 6th, at the Unitarian Chapel, South-place, Finsbury. JOHN CHRISTIE, Esq. was called to the chair.

The CHAIRMAN who is Treasurer of the Society, was happy to say, the funds were in a flourishing condition. He then ennumerated the various items of receipt and expenditure, from which it appeared, that during the last year the former had amounted to the sum of 1,138*l.* 18*s.*; to which was to be added the balance of 329*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.* in the hands of the Treasurer at the last Anniversary, which, with the exception of 359*l.* 14*s.* 11*d.*, yet remaining in his hands, had been expended in effecting the diffusion of Unitarian principles in this and other countries.

The Rev. R. ASPLAND, the Secretary, read the Report of the proceedings of the Committee during the past year. It commenced by stating, that the result of their exertions, for the spread of true and liberal Christianity, was on the whole satisfactory, and that their labours had not been in vain.

The Report then proceeded to detail the exertions of the Committee, for the attainment and preservation of their civil rights. It stated that owing to the lamentable illness of their firm and steady friend (Lord Liverpool), it became a matter of serious consideration, whether the present session was a fit and proper period for them again to press their peculiar claims upon the attention of the Legislature; but after the calmest deliberation they could give on the subject, they were decidedly of opinion that it was, and they had consequently got their bill (the Unitarian marriage bill), introduced into Parliament.

The Report next proceeded to detail the strenuous efforts that had recently been made by the various denominations of Protestant Dissenters, for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, in all which endeavours the Committee had cordially joined. These details have been so recently before the public, that it is unnecessary for us to repeat them. It dilated at much length on the impolicy and disgracefulness of the apathy manifested by the dissenters, in suffering their just claims so long to remain dormant; and expressed their unqualified disapproval, in which they were joined by the most influential among the Dissenters themselves, as well as Lord John Russell, and John Smith, M. P. the intended mover and seconder of the measure, of the postponement of that important question. It then alluded to the expressions of opposition from Mr. Canning, which however, they trusted, were only for reasons of temporary expedience; and they confidently anticipated the speedy removal of these unjust and mischievous statutes. It then glanced at the opposition of certain Dissenters to Catholic Emancipation; but, while it regretted that any should be found who would resist that measure of justice and sound policy, they believed that it was confined to a very small number, and these of the most illiterate of the body.

The Rev. Dr. REES, read the Report of the Book and Tract Department. It stated, the junction of the Unitarian Bible Society with the Association, and that books and tracts had been distributed in Calcutta, Paris, and in various towns in England, and Scotland. It also announced, that the Monthly Repository had been purchased by the Association, and would in future be conducted under the direction of the Committee.

Mr. BOWRING, now the Secretary for the Foreign Department, read, in the unavoidable absence of Mr. Fox, the Report of the Foreign De-

partment. It stated, that a mission had been established at Calcutta, under the superintendance of a Mr. Adam, from which place, by the next anniversary, they hoped to receive gratifying accounts of the spread of Unitarian principles. At Madras, a Unitarian Church had been for some years in existence.

The Report concluded with lamenting the severe indisposition of their revered Secretary, Mr. Fox, which prevented him from continuing his splended and useful services to the Association.

Mr. Aspland and Mr. Bowring both spoke on the folly and iniquity of the Test and Corporation Acts, and against the application to Parliament for their abolition being postponed to the next session.

The following are the Petition read at the meeting, and the Speeches of Messrs. Aspland, Rees, and Bowring, for which we could not find room in our last:

THE PETITION, &c. &c.

Sheweth,

"That your petitioners are, in common with other nonconformists, declared by law to be unworthy of occupying any place or office in the government or corporations, and of trust under his majesty."

"That your petitioners were, on account of their religious opinions, subjected, until lately, to laws conceived in the bitterest spirit of persecution, but from which they have been relieved by a more just, humane, and enlightened policy, whose existence and progress they gratefully acknowledge."

"That in all the efforts which, as Dissenters or as a particular branch of Dissenters, they have made or may continue to make, for their emancipation from the penal anactments which more immediately affect themselves. your petitioners value any success which may follow their exertions, in the exact proportion in which it may conduce to the assertion and establishment of the most extended principles of religious liberty, and as it may tend to defeat and render odious that unjust, absurd, and impolitic exercise of power, by which the community is divided into oppressed and oppressing classes, and religious opinion is made the pretence for civil disabilities, preferences, and exclusions,"

"That your petitioners have zealously concurred individually, and in their immediate circles, in petitions and remonstrances against the enactments by which Protestant Dissenters are with peculiar injustice and inconsistency made to feel the weight of insulting and degrading laws, avowedly directed to other objects, and now preserved only by prejudice or misconception; but they gladly avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the meeting of some of their brethren from all parts of the kingdom, thus to record, as a body, their solemn declaration, which they are convinced would be echoed by the vast majority of their dissenting brethren of every denomination—that their desire for the blessings of liberty is limited by no reserves or qualifications; that it is clogged by no exceptions; that they seek to vindicate for conscience, and therefore for true religion, the free and unbiassed exercise of the judgment and understanding; and that every where, and in every shape they deprecate, as alike futile, impolitic, and unjust, the principle of persecution, or the assumption of a right either or reward, to tolerate, or to punish, in matters which they believe to be too high for human controul."

"Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray your Honourable House, as the prayer most consonant to their feelings and understandings, most worthy in their judgment to be uttered by a Christian and a well-wisher to his fellow creatures, to discard for ever the wretched relics of ignorant and misguided zeal, by abolishing all penal laws in matters of religion, and by placing all the members of the community, in that respect, on an equal footing; to heal the divisions and distractions by which Catholic and Protestant, Church and Dissenters, are are seduced into the unchristian habit of regarding each other with feelings wholly inconsistent with brotherly kindness and charity; and to legislate upon those sound and enlightened principles of freedom which can alone secure to any community peace and harmony, and prosperity and honourable fame."

"And your petitioners shall ever pray."

Rev. Mr. ASPLAND rose to return thanks. He said, that he was always happy when he could render any service to the Unitarian cause, though he had thought that he might be discharged from the church militant: to their conscription, however, he bowed most cheerfully, and though he might not be a very efficient, he trusted at least that he should prove to be a very honest soldier, while for his own part he claimed no other pay than their approbation. He felt unfeigned pleasure in avowing his firm conviction, not only that Unitarianism was true Christianity, but that it was the only form of worship that could preserve Christianity alive in the world. Some very orthodox persons had lately been extremely active in propagating a report of his re-conversion from Unitarianism; but on what grounds such a report had been founded, he was utterly at a loss to know. His personal habits did not incline him to go backwards, and he had observed of those that did take that course, that their heads were apt to be turned and to grow dizzy, in which state they were blind to the things that actually did exist, but contrived to see things that had no existence at all. He was unable to find adequate words to express his gratitude to Providence that he had in early life become a Unitarian. He had been brought up amongst a very pious class of persons, but still he had found himself uneasy; he had felt that he wanted something which they were unable to give him. In the morning of his days he had gone out to seek the manna of Divine truth, and he had found it among the Unitarians, whom he sincerely believed to be, in the orthodox phrase, the Lord's people. He was sure that they had the spirit of the Lord, because where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But with what success were the Unitarians carrying on their operations? If they were to believe one of the public journals of that morning—with no success at all; but then it must be premised, that the reporter of that paper of course understood much more about their matters than they could themselves. So far, however, from the Unitarian cause failing, there never was a time when it stood so high in public estimation, and when they had so much reason to be satisfied, that their operations were obtaining for them a sure footing in the public favour. But he did not wonder that the reporter should have been so much mistaken; when they found a difficulty to get in, when they found the heat of a meeting oppressive, when seats were reserved for the ladies, and when the speeches and reports recorded thousands converted, where the Unitarians could only record units, it was to him little matter of surprise that those who were used to such wholesale proceedings, should look down with contempt on a society where their whole disbursements would scarcely defray the expenses of a travelling Secretary, in some of the popular societies. But he would have been glad, that those who wrote against them, had heard the excellent sermon which had been preached that morning by his respected friend Mr. Kenrick, for he was convinced that the weight of its arguments, and the force of its representations, would have made a favourable impression on their minds; and he trusted that no long time would be suffered to elapse, before it would appear in print for the public benefit. In considering the broad question of Unitarianism, it appeared wonderful to him that it lived at all, so great was the opposition it had to encounter. All changes, however, were necessarily slow; but at the same time no delusion could last long, and when every man came to be convinced that it was his interest not to be deceived, their cause would triumph; and when he said that their cause would triumph, he meant not that this or that creed, but that the great principles on which they were united would triumph. It was not however by force that this triumph was to be obtained, it was by argument and persuasion alone. He was happy to say, that he did not know a single Unitarian who wished his cause to be promoted by any other means; indeed, he did not see how a Unitarian could be a bigot, or resort to denunciations against his fellow-christians; but, if by any chance such an one should rise up, he would be an amusing man indeed, for he would be acting without a motive;

for at the same time that he was a bigot, he would be contending that it was no fault in any individual to stand on his own principles, and to follow wherever the light of truth might lead him. He was unfortunately himself no longer young, and he could remember the time, when to be told that there was a Unitarian in company, would have excited a feeling somewhat akin to disgust; the real fact was, that they had formerly been outlaws, and had only forced themselves within the pale of civilisation by their exertions. By means of Unitarian Associations, the knowledge of Unitarianism had been diffused throughout the country, chapels had been established in different parts, and become numerous, and Unitarians had sprung up in Scotland and Wales, where, till within a very short time, they had been looked upon as non-descript animals. The great mathematician of antiquity had said, that if he had but one point to rest his lever upon, he would move the globe, and so it was with religious truth; the place from which the lever was acting at present, was America: great efforts were making there, and should they be continued in the same spirit in which they had been begun, there could be no doubt but that the effect would be prodigious. A great question at present in agitation, was the Unitarian marriage bill; he hoped, rather than expected, that the bill would pass into an act during the present session. The principle of the bill had been ably and eloquently supported by Lord Liverpool, and the Archbishop of Canterbury; and had been countenanced by many other peers, both spiritual and temporal. The bill had actually passed the House of Commons twice, almost without objection. In a new form the bill was now before the Legislature, and he could not contemplate opposition from the present Administration, so liberal in other matters. Various strange habits of the upper ranks of life adopted for amusement might be accounted for, but he could not understand what sport any one could possibly find in conscience-worrying. The maxim of the English constitution, and the principles of the British Legislation was, that where there is a wrong, there must be a remedy; the wrong in this case was acknowledged, and therefore they would be unjust to Parliament not to rely upon finding an effectual remedy speedily. Another great question before them was the Corporation and Test Acts, the repeal of which, he confidently anticipated sooner or later, from the united and persevering efforts of the great body of Dissenters, who were now roused like a giant from sleep, and would never more rest until they had removed from a free country the enormity of millions of his Majesty's subjects being denied the common rights of free men, and from a free country the scandal of prostituting the most holy ordinance of Christ to mere political ends, those ends also unjust, and uncharitable. He concluded with declaring, that in what he had said, he had in view no sectarian purpose; he considered the term Unitarianism as comprehended in the nobler appellation Christian, and his fondest wish and most earnest prayer was, that the doors of the temple of freedom might be thrown wide open to all denominations of Englishmen; and that Roman Catholic and Protestant Dissenters might enter hand in hand, and there sit down beside the churchman, to consult, not on the means of annoying one another, but, on those of serving their country, the burial-place of their fathers, and the birth-place of their children.

The Rev. Dr. Rees returned thanks. He felt pleasure in holding in that institution the office he had so long held in the Unitarian Book Society before its junction with it. In the promulgation of their sentiments, he considered books as most valuable and important instruments. It was truly interesting to observe, that there had always been an intimate connexion between the progress of literature, and the progress of the Unitarian doctrine. The respected preacher, in his sermon before the Society that morning, had correctly ascribed the origin of the corruption of the Christian doctrine to its reception by heathens, who are unacquainted

with Jewish customs and ideas; and therefore incapable of correctly apprehending the language and allusions of the writers of the New Testament. These errors, Dr. Rees observed, had been confirmed by the ignorance of the dark ages which followed. On the revival of literature in Italy, the doctrine of the divine unity was recovered. While the Medici were with one hand holding out encouragement to the cultivation of letters, they were with the other sowing the seeds of religious truth, which in their own days yielded a considerable crop, but afterwards produced an abundant harvest. Italy, with the revival of letters, had produced some of the earliest and ablest advocates of the Unitarian doctrine. These eminent men, driven from their own country, had carried their opinions first to Switzerland, and afterwards to Poland and Transylvania. The revival of literature in Germany was nearly coeval with the reformation; and amongst the chief and earliest productions of the literature of this period, were those numerous and masterly works on theology and biblical criticism, published by the Unitarians of Poland: the progress of Unitarianism keeping pace here with the progress of literature. The case had been the same in England. One of the first productions of the press in this country was Tindal's New Testament; and one of the first distributors of this work was a lady of Kent, holding Unitarian sentiments, who, against the remonstrances of the young king Edward, was dragged to the stake for her heresy, by Archbishop Cranmer. As English literature advanced, Unitarianism continued its progress. The middle of the 17th century produced, among others, John Milton, not more distinguished for his various literary talents, than for his able defence of the Unitarian doctrine. The same century produced also John Locke, and other men of eminence, holding the same opinions. And, indeed, what is called the Augustan age of English literature, was the Augustan age of Unitarianism, for it produced those admirable quarto tracts which contain some of the best expositions and defences of the Unitarian doctrine. After this followed the great names of Dr. Samuel Clarke, Whiston, and many others, too numerous to mention; still confirming the fact, that literature and Unitarian truth advanced together. He had to apologize for having gove over so wide a field, but it was one over which he had long been accustomed to roam with the greatest delight, which had on every hand yielded him the purest satisfaction, and presented to him prospects the most splendid and animating. He then said, that as many were extolling the power of truth, and professing their zeal on its behalf, it was important for them to consider, that truth, like many others powers, required certain machinery to act upon, in order to produce it effects; books formed a part of this machinery, and he recommended their general use. He thought that Unitarians had not done their duty in this respect. They had not sufficiently encouraged their own writers; their best authors were frequently bearing pecuniary losses by their publications. He knew that this had proved a serious discouragement to them, and had deprived the public of many valuable books on Unitarian sentiments. He would briefly advert in this connexion to the Monthly Repository; as this work was now the property of the Association, and the Committee were its responsible conductors, there could be no violation of delicacy in mentioning it thus publicly. He hoped they should hear no complaints from their Unitarian literary friends, of the contents of the Monthly Repository—that it did not contain a sufficient variety—that it was not learned enough, or not emusing enough; for it rested with them to make it what they pleased. The Committee sought, and would be obliged to them for their contributions; and would spare no pains, he was sure to render it worthy of the denomination from which it proceeded.

Mr. Bowring said that he trusted his rising would not be deemed intrusive; but, connected as his name had been, and in no friendly spirit,

with this important question, he was most anxious to justify the course he had recommended and pursued. Undoubtedly he had not been convinced by the arguments of those who thought that longer delay should be added to the too long delay already incurred in bringing forward claims which only wanted open and constant advocacy to force their way into every honest mind. He thought that the hesitation and doubt which, for nearly half a century, had paralized the exertions of the Dissenters, had been injurious to their cause and their character. To argue, that because they had sinned for forty years in negligence and carelessness they might go on and sin a little longer, seemed to him neither a wise nor a virtuous resolution. It would better become them to enter upon a course of penitence and reform,—it would become them to perform they duty they had so long forgotten, and to give evidence of the interest and confidence they felt in the triumph of their principles, by submitting them to discussion whenever they could find any to lead or any to listen. He saw not how the Catholic claims could be injured by bringing forward the claims of the Dissenters, both being founded on the same great principles. When the Prime Minister had stated that the grievances which oppress the Dissenting body are *theoretical* grievances, not a day, not an hour should have been lost in demonstrating that those grievances were *practical* and *real*. It had been said we should embarrass the Government. He did not think we, as Dissenters, had any thing to do with the political changes of the State. Even those among our parliamentary friends who were most urgent for delay had distinctly told us, that no such consideration ought to influence us. In truth, the question could never be brought forward without embarrassing the Government,—without exciting the hostility of those who would make peculiar privileges the reward of peculiar opinions. If we continue inactive because our enemies applaud our inactivity—

> "If we stand still,
> In fear our *motion* may be mocked or carp'd at,
> We should take root here where we sit, or sit
> State statues only."

State statues, indeed, we have been too long, and it was high time that the old spirit of dissent should be a Promethean fire to give us life and energy. The opinion as to the necessity of now proceeding—nay, more, that the present was a singularly auspicious moment for proceeding, had gathered strength from every thing he had seen,—and assuredly he was not the man to be influenced by such attacks as had been directed against him. His motto was "Onwards," and all the waters of bitterness which might be poured upon him would only refresh and invigorate him to say with bolder determination, "Onwards." If the grievance exists, all times are fit times to remove it; and if not to remove to attempt its removal. His pedigree was of "Old Dissent," and ten generations of Nonconformist blood in his veins might excuse a stronger feeling than inspired others equally sincere. In the cause of truth and freedom he had suffered, and so had his forefathers; but if he knew himself he should not shrink back from the arduous strife, and would do his best, whether subdued or subduing. The Dissenters had lost many a year, but he considered the last year as one by which and in which they had gained much. It was consolatory to see how strong and generous was the sympathy which had been excited in their favour; while one obscure petition, from a place and persons equally obscure, was as yet the only evidence of a disposition on the part of the public to oppose the Dissenting claims. He hoped the relics of past barbarism and intolerance would soon be swept away; but whether that was the case or not, it was delightful to reflect, that though the burning place and the faggot might remain, no one could be found to drag the martyr to the stake.

POETRY.

[ORIGINAL.]

SOCIAL WORSHIP.

If in the closet man may hold
A sweet communion with his God,
And then his secret thoughts unfold,
By weaning there the soul and sod,—
Oh, why from pure religion's dome,
Where brightly burns devotion's flame,
Should man, vain man, perversely roam,
Nor there prefer his humble claim?

There is a time when worldly pride
Of rank and power should be forgot;
The meanest wretch may kneel beside
Whoe'er can boast a happier lot.
The prayers of all ascend above,
From rich and poor assembled round;
Here may the silver links of love
From man to man be sweetly bound.

It matters not if flowers are strew'd—
If feasts are held, or bullocks slain;
Or whether groves of perfum'd wood
Are burnt, this object to attain:
Whether the silent prayer of "*friends*"
Breathe from the humble contrite heart,
Or costly sacrifice ascends,
With all the pomp that wealth impart.

Whether the hallowed ark of old
Be stationed where the prophet's lyre,
Was sweetly strung 'neath roofs of gold,
While near the altar blaz'd the fire;
Or in yon thatch-roof'd cottage, where
The social band together join,—
'Tis all accepted—if sincere,
'Tis all received—for all's divine!

Nor stay we here—for rocks and hills
Proclaim aloud their maker's praise;
The widest rivers, humblest rills,
Alike their grateful homage raise;
The emeral field, the waving wood,
With thousand feather'd songster's fill'd,
All, all adore the source of good,
And all a sacred lesson yield.

J. M.

MY HOME.

From the New York Christian Inquirer.

The rustic cottage, which was on the banks of the Hudson, has been removed to give placé to the dwelling of grandeur.

How often my bosom has thrill'd
At that well-belov'd name with delight;
But alas! those warm feelings are chill'd,
And the hopes of my morn set in night.

Yet still can I fondly retrace
The scenes that to memory come,
And fancy restores me the place,
Where was, but where is not, my home!

Alas! not a vestige is there
Of the cot where my childhood was rear'd;
But a dwelling of grandeur more fair,
On the ruins of that has appeared.

But it looks not so fair to my eye
And when wearied and lonely I roam,
I think of the spot with a sigh,
I could once with delight call my home!

And I now with indifference pass
The abodes of the high and the low;
Yet none with such feelings, alas!
As once in my bosom did glow.

Yet sometimes the thought will arise,
As musing and careless I roam,—
This spot may be dear to some eyes,
And some bosoms may hail it as home!

These groves may, in fancy, appear,
To some who are distant afar,
And this mansion to memory dear,
Still shine like a hope-beaming star!

Then let me no longer repine,
Tho' often dejected I roam;
Tho' the bliss can no longer be mine,
There are some who can think it their home!

CATHARINE.

PRAYER TO THE GRAND OR CAVALLO DEVIL.

Craniapou, Craniapou, na pity nooo, neëamsy poporroo; namma quiblimoo, namma wiriddia.

TRANSLATION.

Grand Devly, Grand Devly, there is your bread, give us good wind; I am going to white man country, to fetch you money.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The length to which our account of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association has extended, with the length of some other articles, has obliged us to postpone several communications; we hope to make up for this soon.

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THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 33. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* SEPTEMBER 1, 1827.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Rom. ix. 5. *Who is over all, God blessed for ever.*

Christ is God over all, as he is by the Father appointed Lord, King, and Governor of all. The Father has committed all judgment to the Son, John v. 22. Has given all things into his hands, xiii. 3. All power is given him in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 18. He is Lord of all, Acts x. 36. God has given him a name above every name, Phil. ii. 9. Above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and has put all things (himself excepted, 1 Cor. xv. 27.) under his feet, and given him to be head over all things, Eph. i. 21, 22. This is our Lord's supreme Godhead. And that he is ευλογητος, blessed for ever, or the object of everlasting blessing, is evident from Rev. v. 12, 13: Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and blessing. Blessing and honour be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever.

Thus it appears, the words may be justly applied to our blessed Lord. But what this part of his character, in which he is more nearly related to believing Gentiles, then to infidel Jews, has to do with privileges belonging to the latter, doth not seem to me very clear: much less can I conceive, why the Apostle, in this particular enumeration of Jewish privileges, should not mention their relation to God, as their God, in which they particularly gloried, (chap. ii. 17.) and which was indeed the glory of all their glories, being the first and grand article in the covenant with Abraham; and which he fails not to insert among the singular privileges of Christians, (chap. v. 11.) when he is shewing, that the subjects of their glorying were not inferior to those

of the Jew, How could he overlook the main article in this list? Or what if there should be a transposition of a single letter in the text ὁ ὤν for ὢν ὁ? This will remove every difficulty, for then the text will run naturally enough thus: Whose is the adoption, &c. Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh is Christ, Whose is the God over all, blessed for ever. Amen. Thus the grand privilege will be inserted to advantage, and stand at the top of a lofty climax, rising from the Fathers, to Christ, to God. We have indeed no copy to justify this reading; but the aforesaid considerations seem to make it probable the article (ό) might be very early transposed. This is only my conjecture.

As there are no accents in the ancient manuscript, a transcriber might take (ων) the genitive plural, for the participle of εἰμι, and then the article (ό), which follows, ought, agreeably to the Greek idiom, to precede. This might occasion the transposition.

When I wrote what is above, I did not know any other author had made the same remark; but I am informed it is to be found in Dr. Whitby's Last Thoughts, with some other arguments to support it. As I never saw the book, I can only refer the inquisitive reader to it.

Dr. John Taylor.

When our Apostle denominates the Messiah by the phrase of *God over all,* we must make him as far as we can, his own interpreter, and explain so singular an application to these words by other passages of greater precision and perspecuity, in consistency too with the general tenour of his ideas upon this subject. As we are told in the gospels, that all authority in heaven and npon earth is given to Jesus—that the Father hath put all things into his hand, even power over all flesh—that he is Lord of all: so he is styled by our apostle the *head* of the church—the *head over all things* to the church—the Lord both of the dead and the living. These quotations will furnish us perhaps, with the exact signification of the clause before us. *Christ is God over all,* inasmuch as he is constituted the chief Ruler, the only Legislator, and the final Judge, of the body of his church.

This adjustment of the text, which is different from any I have ever seen, will not be deemed destitute of merit, I should think, by those who accustom themselves to determine, without any retrospect to hereditary opinions or any regard to established interpretations, from the dictates of fair criticism and the clear voice of Scripture. It must not, however, and shall not be dissembled, that, in spite of this harmony in all the oriental versions with each other, the concurrence of the Vulgate and all the MSS. now extant, in the present reading; there are some very probable reasons for concluding a transposition of two small words to have taken place, ὁ ὢν for ὢν ὁ, and this from the very earliest antiquity. Such an easy and trivial mistake, no one, who considers the weariness of transcribing and the probable ignorance of transcribers, can think at all unlikely to have happened. For observe, upon this extremely slight alteration, the amazing improvement of the passage; the uncommon grandeur of the climax, the pertinency of the argument, the completeness of the paragraph, and the rotundity of the conclusion.

Who are Israelites, of whom was the adoption of Sons, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the institution of the Law, and the Service, and the Promises:

Of whom were the Fathers; of whom was the Christ according to the flesh; of whom was God, who is over all, blessed for evermore. Amen.

Where shall we find a more striking selection of the principal circumstances, (one great source of the sublime) or a more just and majestic gradation?—What? Is it possible then, that Paul, himself a Jew and proud of his descent, in enumerating the exclusive privileges of the Jewish nation, and in setting forth the vast superiority, which their *theocratic* polity gave them over the communities of the earth;—is it possible, I say, that he should overlook their pre-eminent distinction, the very characteristic of their constitution—that is, the *peculiar relation*, in which they stood to their King Jehovah? He was *their God*, and they were *his people:* he was *their Father*, and they were the *sons* and *daughters* of the *Lord Almighty*—Such an omission is equally incredible and unaccountable.

And let the reader judge whether another difficulty, which I am now proceeding to point out, be not equally insuperable with the former. Would St. Paul, who prided himself in becoming all things to all men, and who confessedly employed a remarkable condescension in accommodating both his reasonings and his demeanour to conciliate the affections of the Jews: confront his countrymen at a time, when he was attempting to ingratiate himself by an argument in their commendation, with such a questionable phrase as this—*Christ who is God over all?* אל שדי, *Al Shaddai*, a phrase which every Jew could not fail to understand, as making the Messiah, who is always spoken of in Jewish authors, as a person not yet existing, and to come hereafter from the stock of David, equal to his own Omnipotent Jehovah. Would they not immediately revolt at such a declaration as perfectly inconsistent with their notions of the Messiah's personal condition; as delivering a doctrine, which they have constantly rejected with the utmost reprobation, for an abominable corruption of true religion, a blasphemous derogation from the unrivalled majesty of God; a doctrine not revealed in their oracles, but expressly and perpetually forbidden; a doctrine immediately subversive of their covenant with Jehovah, and unknown to their Fathers of every generation.

Besides: this denomination of Christ, though it may be explained into some tolerable consistency with the declarations of our apostle and other evangelical writers by the method above proposed, does not agree so well with a more explicit and correspondent passage in another epistle.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism: one God and father of all, who is over all. The force of this argument resulting from a most express and unequivocal distinction between our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and *one God the Father* WHO IS OVER ALL, cannot be repelled by any contrivance or qualifications whatsoever.

But I have still in reserve another, and that a most decisive plea, in behalf of this transposition of the words. It is this: That very intelligent and useful author *Eusebius*, in his treatise against *Marcellus*, professedly undertakes to prove, that Jesus Christ is *God over all.* For this purpose he adduces various

passages from the New Testament, but the text now under consideration, more pertinent by far than all the rest, and directly in his favour, he does not quote on this occasion. Let any man pretend this omission to be probable or even possible, if the present reading were generally admitted or indeed known in his time.

Let me be permitted to adduce also a passage from *Origen:*

"We profoundly venerate God, and we know that the Son has been highly advanced by the Father. If it so be, however, that in this multitude of believers, who are likely to have variances in opinion, some *precipitately maintain the Saviour to be God over all:* yet will not *we* venture upon such a position, who believe him when he says: *the Father, who sent me, is* GREATER *than I.*"

Add to this, that none of the early christians, when intent upon aggrandising their Saviour, call him *God over all.*

Gilbert Wakefield.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

"Is Saul also among the Prophets?" And is there not a danger of the Rev. D. Thom, entering the camp of those heretics that are every where spoken against?

SIR,

In reading a pamphlet, entitled "A Letter to the Rev. T. P. Pope, &c." pointing out, what the author deems some considerable errors in Mr. Pope's controversy with Mr. Maguire, I was struck with some of the sentiments it contained. The author appears, from some parts of his reasoning, to be a high Antinomian, and from other parts of his pamphlet one is led to suppose that he is at least a Sabellian, which is the half-way house to Unitarianism, and at which those who arrive seldom stop long. This pamphlet is attributed to the Rev. David Thom of Liverpool, who was some time since condemned by the

Scotch Inquisition, which sent their familiars, &c., across the Tweed for that purpose. Perhaps their treatment may have led the Rev. Gentleman to a train of thoughts that will carry him entirely from the pestilential marshes of reputed orthodoxy into the pleasant vale of pure and scriptural truth, where every thing is calculated to inspire the soul with joy.

The following Extracts will say more on the subject than I can, and will, I have no doubt, be perused with interest by your readers.—I am, Sir, yours,

A UNITARIAN.

"The only essential doctrine of Christianity, or rather, properly speaking, the essence of Christianity itself, is the plain and simple fact, that Jesus of Nazareth, whose history we have recorded by the four evangelists, is the *Messiah, Christ,* or *anointed one,* that should come into the world. Instead of indulging in any thing that might have the appearance of reasoning on the subject, let the few following plain, explicit, and conclusive passages of scripture be consulted, and settle the matter—Matt. xvi. 15—18, John vi. 68, 69, Acts viii. 37, Rom. x. 9. To shew that Jesus was the Christ, or anointed one, was the drift or import of the sermons of Peter, recorded in the second and third chapters of the Acts, and of Paul, in the thirteenth of the Acts, and of the address of Paul and Silas to the jailor, alluded to in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, 31 and 32 verses. Be it remembered, that all the prophets who lived, and delivered their messages during the subsistence of the former dispensation, as well as that very dispensation itself, pointed forward to one who, at a fnture period, was to arise and be revealed, and who was to be anointed prophet, priest, and king over his people for evermore. Now the simple declaration made to those who lived in the time of Jesus of Nazareth, and to men who have lived in every succeeding age, is neither more nor less than this, that Jesus is that very Messiah, Christ, or anointed one, of *whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.* With the belief of this simple, but glorious and important truth, salvation and life eternal stand inseparably connected; ignorance of it, on the other hand, *leaves the individual under condemnation.* Can the matter be more plainly stated than it is in the first verse of the fifth chapter of 1 John, taken in connection with the passages already alluded to in Matt. xvi. and John vi.? *Whosoever believeth,* what, 39, or 33, or any other number of articles? No; *whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, or anointed one,* IS BORN OF GOD." pp. 47, 48.

"I must, however, enquire in what part of the scriptures you find the *scholastic doctrine of the Trinity* revealed, and also, upon what authority you build your opinion, that *human nature must be rectified and improved,*

before a man can obtain admission into the kingdom of heaven? With regard to the former of these points, I perceive it clearly stated in the sacred writings, that Jesus is *God with us*, Matt. i. 23, that *God was manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16, that Jesus *is the Lord from heaven*, 1 Cor. xv. 47, that he is *God over all, blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5, that he is *the great God and our Saviour*, Titus ii. 13, the *only wise God, our Saviour*, &c. &c. but I cannot perceive, from the beginning of the inspired volume to the end of it, a single intimation, that there are *three distinct persons, or existences, in the divine essence.* Scripture reveals the supreme being to us, *not as he exists essentially*, for his essence he alone can comprehend, but in such a way as we are capable of comprehending him, and besides, that to suppose three distinct existences in the supreme being, whether these be considered three *finite*, or three *infinite* existences, is a hypothesis pregnant both with blasphemy and absurdity, it is to represent God as having made *a revelation of himself to us*, which from our being unable to understand it, is in reality *no revelation at all.* The plain matter of fact, as gathered from scripture itself is, that in the sacred writings, and particularly in the New Testament, the one infinite God reveals himself to his people, in three distinct covenant characters or relations, viz. as *the Father*, by sending his Son into the world, *as the Son*, in the person of the Lord Jesus, and *as the Holy Spirit*, communicating through the medium of the scriptures, this important information to them. In other words, God is revealed as the Father by his Son Jesus, *who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*, and who has expressly declared, *he that hath seen me, hath seen the father*, and in the very fact of recording, or causing to be committed to writing this revelation, God is revealed as the Holy Spirit.—It is the same God who is revealed as the Son,—and it is the same God, who is revealed as the Holy Spirit,—and, as I withstand, as a perverter of scripture, the man who would degrade the Lord Jesus to *a level with the mere natural descendants of Adam*, so I equally withstand, as a perverter of scripture, the man who so states matters, as either directly to express, or indirectly to lead to the inference, that there are *three Gods.*" pp. 52, 53.

RELIGIOUS CHARITY.

(From an American Paper.

" Religion, without the corruption of imposture, never banishes reason, or embitters the heart; on the contrary, it improves and enlarges the faculties of men, exalts their spirits, inspires them with generous and beneficent affections towards one another, and with universal love and benevolence to the whole creation: nor can we better shew our love to God, than by our love to our neighbour.

Almighty God instituted religion for the sake of men; their frail power of acting could no further be interesting to him, than to see his creatures increasing their own happiness, by making happiness mutual among themselves: Religion therefore teaches and animates them to be assisting, forgiving, kind, and merciful to one another. But when the spirit, of *false zeal* agitates them to revile, calumniate, hate, and destroy one another it is contradictory to religion, and a defiance to the Author of it. To quarrel about belief and opinions, which do not immediately produce practical virtue and social duties, is wicked and absurd; it is to be wicked in behalf of righteousness, and to be cruel out of piety.

But the spirit and precepts of true religion are love and charity, given to inspire men with every social virtue. *Imposture*, indeed, among people and nations who call themselves christians, has introduced gallies, racks, and dungeons, to propagate her tenets; and christianity has proved as bloody and inhuman as Mahometanism. The heathen tyrants, in persecuting christianity, only destroyed christians; but when christian tyrants were for protecting none but *true christians*, that is, those who were as vicious, as ignorant, or misled as themselves; when they were for punishing all who were not *true christians*, that is, all that were better and wiser than themselves, who would take religion from no man's word, but from the word of God alone; then christians listed against christians, and banished christianity by a false friendship to the professors, who, at the same time, were struggling for secular power, not religious advantages; *thus zealots lied for the truth, and killed one another for God's sake.*

To encourage all members of a society to perform the practical duties of religion, is of general interest; to enforce all to consent to the opinions of men, which are merely speculative, is a sure method to destroy any society; no man's belief is in his own power, much less in the power of another. Men may be forced to become hypocrites; they may be compelled to belie their consciences, or to act against them; they may be driven to infidelity; for if they suspect religion is an imposture, infidelity is the next consequence, from a belief, that religion countenances and imposes bitterness, outrage, inhumanity; people cannot be made religious by force, nor can all the powers in the world make a man embrace truly what his reason tells him is absurd; convict his errors, if such there are, by reason, and it will seldom fail of effect. Power can do nothing; kindness example, argument, have all a prevailing efficacy.

As arbitrary princes want a religion suited to the genius of their power they persecute all religion which is against tyranny, as all true religion is; for this reason, not one of the great absolute princes in Europe embraced the reformation, nor would suffer their people to embrace it, but were all bitter and professed enemies to it. Whereas all the great free states, except Poland, and most of the small free states, became protestants.

Thus the English, the Scotch, the Dutch, the Bohemians, and Sweden and Denmark (which were then free kingdoms) the greatest part of Switzerland and Geneva, with all the Hans Towns, which were not awed by the emperor, flung off the popish yoke.

Liberty is the preservation of religion; for no one will deny that in King James's time we owed the preservation of our religion to our liberties, which both our clergy and people almost unanimously concurred to defend with a resolution and boldness worthy Britons and freemen.

The whole scope of this letter is to shew my countrymen, how superior in happiness they are to the greatest part of the world. From hence I would inculcate a principle of christianity, brotherly love, and charity; that no difference in particular modes of thinking, should force them into a false zeal, which will hurry them into intemperance, uncharitableness, and the evils of a bigoted mind."

ON REGENERATION.

Written for the Christian Reflector.

To the serious attentive inquirer after the truth, as it is in Christ Jesus, the following observations are offered, not as a perfect dissertation, but as a few short disjointed hints, which it is hoped will have the effect of eliciting something from abler pens. In the 3rd chapter of John's gospel we are told that Jesus, the man of Nazareth, said unto Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." These words have, by the self-styled orthodox, been considered as a proof that those who are destined for a future state of happiness will, during the present state of existence, experience some change of a secret indefinable nature to which they give the name of Regeneration, or the New Birth. It is the opinion of some, that man has no means of knowing when this wonderful, this mysterious change takes place: by others equally orthodox, and equally intolerant, it is asserted, that not only the day, but even the moment when the New Birth commences may be distinctly known, in consequence of its being ushered in by the most dreadful agonies and conflicts of the mind. Though almost all of the present day rank themselves under one or other of these two opinions, we shall not he-

sitate in asserting that we consider both of them erroneous, regarding the New Birth as referring to that mystery which Paul showed to the Corinthians, by the which we are informed that "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." When Nicodemus inquired if a man could enter a second time into his mother's womb, the Lord replied, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Paul, speaking of the body at the time of the resurrection, says, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." We are likewise told by the same apostle, that "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven." Matthew tells us, in the 19th chapter of his gospel, that Christ said unto his disciples, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the *regeneration*, when the son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Paul, speaking of our Saviour, bestows on him the following epithets:—"The first-born among many brethren," "The first-fruits of those who sleep," "The first-born of the whole creation," and "The first-born from the dead."

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COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from page 171.)

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

"*O Lord, from whom all good things do come; grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*"

The spirit of the prayer is to be admired. It is pious and holy, to wish, to think and perform what is good; and it is proper, that we should address our prayers *through* our Lord Jesus Christ. But it is in vain for us to pray for inspiration.

The days of inspiration ended with the deaths of the Apostles. All persons since that time, who have considered themselves inspired, have been imposed upon by a warm imagination, which they have erroneously taken for the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Had any of the numerous enthusiasts, pretending to inspiration, really possessed the Holy Spirit, they would have performed miracles, spoken divers languages without learning them, and foretold future events. These were the proofs which Jesus and his Apostles gave of *their* inspiration, and none other can be admitted as credentials of such a qualification.

Besides, are we to suppose that the Holy Spirit would teach doctrines irreconcilable with each other? Did it dictate the peculiar sentiments of the Quaker, the Swedenborgian, the Baptist, the Churchman, the Arminian, and the Calvinist? Surely this would be to set the Holy Spirit against itself, and to think irreverently of it. Yet these conflicting religious professors equally pretend to inspiration. Which of them are we to believe? None. We have a more sure guide,—the Holy Scriptures; which are able to make us wise unto salvation.

SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

Mr. Marsom has ingeniously shewn, in some admirable papers in the Monthly Repository, that the term Michael signifies a great prince. Daniel applies it to Cyrus king of Persia, (x. 13, 21, and xii. 1.) And John, in the Apocalypse, (xii. 7), uses the same expression when speaking of Constantine, the first christian emperor.

ALL SAINTS DAY.

Robinson has stated in his admirable tract on Good Friday, that the keeping of Saint days, as part of the religion of the Established Church, met with great opposition, and was at last "carried by a majority of one single vote, and that given by proxy!" This ingenious and facetious writer says, "It is an unquestionable fact, that the religion of all the good people of the Church of England was, in 1562, put to the vote of one hundred and seventeen priests, many of whom could hardly write their

names, and several of whom were not present, and who voted by proxy, and that ceremonies and holidays were carried by a majority of one single vote, and that given by proxy! Whether the absent member, who had the casting vote, were talking, or journeying, or hunting, or sleeping, is immaterial; he was the Almightly Creator of this article of English religion, and his power decreed rites and ceremonies, and matters of *high behest*."—*(History and Mystery, &c. p. 12.)*

THE COMMUNION.

"*I believe in one God the Father Almighty, &c.*"

This is what is called the Nicene Creed, although the latter part of it is taken from the creed of the council of Chalcedon, which was held many years after the introduction of the other creed, viz. A. D. 451.

In the Nicene Creed, we first find supported, by a convocation of bishops (or men of similar infirmities with ourselves), the unscriptural doctrine of the Godhead of Christ. This convocation was held in the year 325, during the reign of Constantine, who *insisted*, in opposition to the belief of the great majority of christians, that the bishops then assembled, should decree, that Christ was *part* of the Godhead. Thus we find, that the tyrannical decree of a despot first publicly established the imposition, that the son of Joseph and Mary, the humble inhabitant of Nazareth, was *part* of that being, whom "*heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain.*" It must, however, be observed, that neither Constantine, nor any person then living, ever conceived the absurdity, that Christ was in all respects equal with God. All that the emperor and the council of Nice contended for was, that Christ was *part* of the Deity, in the same sense as a sun-beam is part of the sun:—*very God of very God.* It was a considerable time after this council, that the Doctrine of the Trinity, as it now stands, was established.

The expression of *very God of very God*, if it has any meaning at all, must signify one true God proceeding from another true God; and if we have not in this the idea of *two* Gods, I am at a loss to understand the import of words.

One of these is also represented as sitting at the "right hand" of the other; which must mean distinction and inferiority, whether the expression be taken figuratively or literally. It denotes in the scriptures *next in rank*.

It is a curious distinction, "*begotten*, not *made*." Does the former term signify the production of being? Then it expresses the latter. Does it mean merely adopted? Then it is equally fatal to the Trinity; for adoption not only implies distinction, but also inferiority.

In this creed we have the mission, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and the object of Christ's mission is stated to be, the salvation of man. Thus, in the midst of much corruption, we have some of the most essential doctrines of christianity: and thus it has been in the worst of times, and the worst of systems. And we may hence feel confident, that however truth may be obscured, it will not be lost; but that he who watches over it, will continue to preserve it, and will finally purge the chaff away.

PURGATOR.

(To be continued.)

JOHN'S BAPTISM.

It must be admitted that John's was proselyte baptism, that his baptizing those he taught, was the mode in which he received them as disciples; and that his teaching and baptizing were to prepare a people for the Lord, that is, for the Messiah, for the new and spiritual dispensation which Jesus should introduce: hence he said, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand", Matt. iii. 2. John's baptism, like the whole of his ministry, being designed as preparatory to the introduction of the gospel dispensation, it could not be intended to continue after that dispensation was introduced.

John's was not christian baptism; for he was not the Christ, neither did he introduce christianity; he only prepared the way for the introduction of it; and he pointed out to his hearers that he who came after him should administer a different baptism from that which he administered, Matt. iii. 11: consequently

the baptism of John cannot be regarded as a gospel ordinance, nor can his disciples being baptized be regarded as a precedent to be followed by christians, who are not his disciples, but the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Wright's Essay.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

By the baptism of Jesus is meant his being baptized by John. Of this we have an account in the following texts: Matt. iii. 13, &c., Mark i. 9, Luke iii. 21.

The baptism to which Jesus submitted was not a christian ordinance, but John's baptism: and, from the texts in which it is mentioned, it appears that the design of his being baptized by John was not to establish a precedent to be copied by his followers; for they are not called to submit to John's baptism, and so to become his disciples; but it took place, in accordance with the leading object of John's ministry, that Jesus should be made manifest to Israel, John i. 31.

Though Jesus is a pattern to all his followers, no conclusive argument can be derived merely from the circumstance of his being baptized, in favour of baptizing christians in all ages: for he was also circumcised, and he conformed to the Jewish law, under which he was made, Gal. iv. 4., as well as to the baptism of John; but no christian will conclude from this, that, because he is our pattern, therefore we ought all to be circumcised, and to conform ourselves to the Jewish law: yet this would be as proper as it is to conclude that because he submitted to John's baptism therefore we ought all to be baptized. As the baptism of John, to which Jesus submitted, was not a christian ordinance, christianity not being then introduced, and as we are no where in the New Testament told that he submitted to baptism to set us an example, or referred to baptism as a precedent which we ought to follow, we can have no authority to make use of his baptism as furnishing an argnment in favour of the perpetuity of baptism: we must find some better evidence of its designed perpetuity, or give up that point as incapable of defence.

Wright's Essay.

DR. CARPENTER'S REPORTED CONVERSION.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

It has been strongly reported in this neighbourhood that Dr. Carpenter, of Bristol, lately renounced Unitarianism, as a system whose doctrines are not consistent with christianity. At the first I regarded it as an idle report, an orthodox slander; and am happy to find, from the following brief letter, addressed by the Dr. to the Monthly Repository, that the report is groundless; your insertion of the same will oblige yours,

A CONSTANT READER.

Near Wigan.

Isle of Wight, July 17th, 1827.

SIR,

Having observed on my return from the Continent, a paragraph in the English Papers, intimating that I had seceded from the Unitarian faith, I think well to state, that my belief remains unchanged, that Unitarianism is the faith of the Gospel

L. CAPENTER.

ON JUDICIAL OATHS.

"I'll take thy word for faith, not ask thine oath;
Who shuns not to break one, will sure crack both."

SHAKESPEARE.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

The preceeding words are in my opinion, particularly deserving the attention of every christian: They perfectly accord with those excellent remarks which we find in the thirty-fourth and three following verses of the fifth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel; "But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; nor by earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of

the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." And they likewise agree with those dictates of natural religion by which we are taught that our God and Father is not only omnipotent, but that he is likewise omnipresent and consequently omniscient; being acquainted with our actions, our words, and even with our most secret thoughts. To those who in conformity with the articles of the Church of England, believe "that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth," might be addressed with the greatest propriety the following words of Elijah, "*Cry aloud: for he is a God; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.*

ON THE GRAND OR CAVALLO DEVIL.

Priestcraft was, is, and will be still the same,
And vary nought excepting in the name;
Whilst men will lie, men will their lies receive,
And any fiction as God's word believe.

Along the Crew-Coast of Africa the natives have a firm faith in regard to the habitation of a being whom they denominate Craniapou, Grand Devil (or Grand Devly as they pronounce it;) This mighty personage, who possesses such a prominent situation in the Dramatis Personæ of almost every system of supernatural Theology, resides (if we are to place any reliance on the faith of the African,) in a cave at Cavallo, whence he is often named the Cavallo Devil. This cave is visited by a greater resort of pilgrims than either the Temple of Mecca or the Land of Palestine ever was: it is furnished with several small openings at which the *enlightened, pious, and religious* African offers up his prayers for what he needs, his thanks for what he has received, and likewise leaves presents of Rice, Beads, Cloth, Tobacco, Rum, &c., and receives answers from the mouth of his Satanic majesty who however never appears to his worshippers to whom, in lieu of the good things of this world, he gives small articles such as rings of brass, iron or ivory, a bird's feather, a tiger's tooth, &c. or a portion of a substance very similar to mortar, which they wear in a little bag, and daily mix a small portion of it with water to smear their face:

To these articles they give the name of fettish or gregrah; they believe that no injury can happen to them while possessed of such a charm; and they assert that no fire can burn, no water drown, and no gun or sword destroy them, provided they possess a sufficient faith in the truly miraculous, powers of their fettish. The greater the wealth and the higher the rank of an individual, the more numerous are his fettishes. When asked the use of his gregrah, the poor untutor'd African replies in all the simplicity of pious ignorance, "*He take care me.*" Oh Superstition! how extensive is thy influence! How baneful are its effects!

Z.

BOLTON PETITION.

For the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

SIR,

A Report having been circulated, that the Petition to the House of Commons from the Unitarians, assembling in the Meeting House, Moor Lane, Bolton, was rejected by the House on account of violent and improper expressions contained in it; it is thought necessary by the Petitioners to correct this error; for the petition was not cast out, but was presented by Lord Folkstone, who also wrote to one of the Petitioners, saying that he was happy that the Petition was confided to his care—another member of that Honourable House, in a letter to another of the Petitioners, said, he agreed with every word of the Petition.

If, Sir, you will have the goodness to insert the Petition in the Christian Reflector, those who have been forward to condemn the petitioners unheard, may have an opportunity of correcting their error; and the public will be able to judge on the subject.

Yours respectfully,

ARISTIDES.

PETITION.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned, being Protestant Dissenters, assembling for religious worship at the Unitarian Meeting House, Moor Lane, in Bolton-le-moors, earnestly solicit the attention of your Honourable House to our privations as Citizens of a free country. By the operation of certain acts passed in the reign of King Charles the second, and commonly called the Corporation and Test Acts, by which all persons are excluded, under heavy penalties, from the magistracy, from corporations, and from every

place of trust or command under his Majesty, who shall not qualify themselves by professing their conformity with the Church of England, so far as to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper according to its usages.

Persecution is not an original feature in any religion but it is always the strongly marked feature of all law-religions, or religions established by law.—Claiming therefore the exercise of the right of private judgment, which we willingly allow to others we affirm, that, "Conscience is not controllable by human laws, nor amenable to human tribunals. Persecution, or attempts to force conscience, will never produce conviction; they are only calculated to make hypocrites or martyrs," we cannot therefore, offer that conformity which is required of us, and in default of which we are excluded from the common rights and honours of citizenship.

Again, claiming, as their right and duty, to exercise, in common with all their fellow men, their free and unfettered judgment in matters of religion, your petitioners deem the assumption of authority, whether to punish or to tolerate another in the performance of his religious duties, as an encouragement to insincerity, an unwarrantable pretence to infallibility, a cruel injustice to individuals, a source of weakness and division in the state, and, finally, a grievous insult and injury to religion itself; and more especially they deem the connexion of a solemn religious ordinance with the qualification for secular office a profanation, against which, as christians, they are bound, on all occasions, to protest.

We also further beg to assure your Honourable House that any apparent neglect to make known our privations and sufferings to your Honourable House do not arise from indifference to our situation, nor as it has been affirmed from confidence in the management of the national affairs, but from our inability to sustain the expense of such repeated communications—combined with our fears of your Honourable House disregarding the prayer of our petitions. Instead of watching the interest of those who pay the taxes, you seem to be generally engaged in furthering the views of those who receive and live upon the taxes. Consequently we are disposed to coincide with the late Mr. Pitt, that without a Parliamentary Reform, we cannot be safe against bad ministers, nor can even good ministers be of use to us. No honest man can, according to the present system be minister, we therefore most earnestly and sincerely pray your Honourable House will grant your petitioners such a reform as will render Taxation and Representation coeval.

Your petitioners, therefore, respectfully and earnestly solicit your Honourable House, to condescend to take these laws into your early consideration, and to remove the grievances which result from them;—to relieve this country from the reproach, which belongs to her, of profaning the ordinances of Christianity for secular ends;—and to declare and act, in all

things, upon those great principles of Religious Liberty, which, as your petitioners believe, are essential to the peace and virtue and happiness of mankind.

And your petitioners shall ever pray.

Obituary.

JUNE 21st, at *Pimlico*, after a short illness, the REV. JOHN SMALL, one of the ministers of the Unitarian Chapel, York-street, St. James Square. Mr. S. was a native of Dundee in Scotland, where his father exercised the profession of a schoolmaster. It is understood that he lost both his parents whilst he was very young. In the early part of his life he joined one of the congregational churches founded by Mr. Robert Haldane, but which were afterwards deserted by that gentleman upon his adopting other religious views resembling Sandemanianism. Mr. Small was for some time a member of one of these congregations meeting at Perth, of which Mr. Little, now of Washington, U. S. was the minister. In the year 1804, he was admitted a student at the Homerton Academy, on the foundation of the King's Head Society, and remained there for the full term of six years. During his stay in this institution, he was considered one of the best scholars, and was distinguished by his superior talents, especially by his singular powers of extemporaneous address. There is reason to believe that his religious sentiments had undergone a considerable change before he left Homerton, though he had made no direct avowal of his relinquishment of Calvinism. Soon after quitting the Academy he withdrew from his Calvinistic connexion and joined himself with the Unitarians. In 1811, he went to Hinckley in Leicestershire, where he officiated during nearly a year, for the late Rev. Herbert Jenkins, whose health was at that time in a very precarious state. From Hinckley he went to Birmingham, where his old friend Mr. Little was then residing, and intending we believe to apply himself wholly to the occupation of a schoolmaster. His stay there, was, however, but short, for at the recommendation of Dr. Toulmin he went to officiate to the Unitarian congregation at Wolverhampton, and shortly after removed to Coseley, where he continued to exercise his ministry till his removal to London, at the close of the last year, to be one of the ministers at the York-street Chapel. Mr. Small had complained of indisposition from his first settlement in the metropolis, but the state of his health had not obliged him to suspend the public duties of his profession till within a few weeks of his death. Nor did his medical attendants for some time apprehend danger; the bursting of an abscess in the intestines, the existence of which had never been

suspected, first revealed the nature of his complaint, placed him at once beyond the relief of medical skill and terminated his life in a few hours. He was interred in the burying ground belonging to the General Baptist Congregation in Worship Street, on Monday, June 25th. Dr. Rees officiated at the funeral, and also preached a sermon on the occasion of his death on the following Sunday, July 1st, at York Street Chapel. The black cloth with which the pulpit, desk, &c., were covered, were just provided, a few weeks before, on the mourning for the Duke of York, when Mr. Small preached a funeral sermon. It was next used for a similar service on his own decease.

Monthly Repository.

MR. CANNING.

On the 8th of August, aged 57, the Right Honourable George Canning one of his Majesty's Most Honourable privy Council, &c. &c. &c.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Rev. W. HINCKS.

On Sunday, August the 19th, the Rev. W. Hincks delivered his farewell Discourse to the Unitarian Congregation in Renshaw Street. Mr. Hincks has removed to York, having been elected to the Professorship of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, in the College there.

Before leaving Liverpool, the Congregation presented Mr. H. with a very elegant Gold Watch, with handsome gold chain, key, and two seals, on one of which his initials are engraved.

The following Inscription is engraved on the outer case.

TO
THE REV. WILLIAM HINCKS,
A
TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM,
FROM
The Unitarian Congregation, Renshaw Street,
LIVERPOOL.

1827.

Manchester College, York.

The annual examination of Students educated in this College was held from Monday, June 25th, to Thursday June 28th. The examination was closed by an excellent address to the students by the Rev. W. Turner, Visitor.

Kent Unitarian Baptists.

THE annual association of the Kent Unitarian Baptists was held at Chatham, Tuesday, May 15th. The Rev. B. Mardon and the Rev. J. Martin engaged in the devotional exercises, and the Rev. D. Eaton of London, delivered an excellent discourse from John viii. 48.

Sussex Unitarian Association.

THE eighth anniversary of the Sussex Unitarian Association was held at Brighton, on Wednesday, 30th May, when the Rev. R. Scott of Portsmouth, delivered on the occasion a very interesting discourse from Gen. xiv. 18.

Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Association.

THE annual meeting of this Association was held on Wednesday the 6th of June. There were two religious services, conducted by the Rev. H. Hutton of Birmingham, and several other ministers, viz. the Revds. J. Hawkes, R. B. Aspland A. M., E. Hawkes, A. M., H. Clarke, ——— Buxton, and R. Shawcross. The next meeting will be held at Nantwich, and the Rev. R. B. Aspland of Chester is appointed to preach.

Anniversary of the Sunday School at Welburn, near York.

THE annual meeting of this valuable institution took place on Monday, May 28th, when a religious service was conducted, and an excellent sermon preached on behalf of the School, by the Rev. W. Turner of York. After the service the children, to the number of seventy, assembled to Tea; and when they were despatched to their sports, the members of the congregation sat down, in company with such friends of the school from the neighbourhood as were assembled on the occasion.

Unitarian Association at Hull.

ON Wednesday and Thursday the 4th and 5th of July, the anniversary meeting of the Unitarian Association of Hull, Doncaster, Lincoln, Thorne, &c., was held at Hull; on Thursday morning the Rev. W. Duffield of Thorne, preached a sermon on the respect entertained by the Unitarians for the authority of the sacred scriptures.

On the evening of the same day, the Rev. W. Worsley of Gainsborough, delivered a sermon on the evils of persecution. The meeting was highly interesting, and we are glad to learn that Unitarianism is on the increase in that part of the kingdom.

Unitarian Tract Society for Warwickshire, and the neighbouring Counties.

THE twenty-first anniversary of this Society was held on Wednesday July 11th, in the Unitarian Chapel, Alcester. The Rev. E. Bristow of Birmingham, conducted the devotional service, and read the scriptures; and the Rev. John Reynell Wreford, one of the pastors of the New Meeting House, Birmingham, delivered a discourse on John i. 45, 46.

At the conclusion of the religious services, the chair was taken by Thomas Eyre Lee, Esq. and the usual business of the Society transacted. The Rev. H. Hutton resigned the office of Secretary, which he had held for four years, and the Rev. J. R. Wreford acceded to the unanimous request of the meeting to undertake that office for the ensuing year.

Buxton Chapel.

THIS Chapel was opened for the season, on Sunday, July 29th. The following are the names of the ministers who are appointed to conduct the religious services, which are held morning and evening.

Revds. J. R. Beard, Noah Jones, Peter Wright, Samuel Parker, William Tate, J. H. Bransby, John Gaskell, James Taylor, John James Tayler, Joseph Ashton.

The Chapel will be closed on the 30th of September.

Southern Unitarian Society.

THE annual meeting of the Southern Unitarian Society, was held at Chichester on Thursday the 5th July. The Rev. T. W. Horsfield commenced the service, by prayer and reading the scriptures; the Rev. Russel Scott delivered the second prayer; and the Rev. J. G. Robberds, preached the annual sermon from 1 Tim. ii. 5, on the *supposition* of two natures in Christ proving that it was impossible, and if possible, inconsistent with facts, as well as insufficient for the professed purposes. In the evening, the Rev. J. G. Robberds introduced the service, and the Rev. T. W. Horsfield delivered an excellent discourse from John i. 46, in refutation of the prevailing prejudices against Unitarians.

In the afternoon, fifty persons dined together at the Fleece Inn; nine new members were added to the Society, and much harmony and good feeling prevailed.

POETRY.

HE WALKED WITH GOD.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

Gen. v. 2.

He walked with God in holy joy,
While yet his days were few;
The deep glad spirit of the boy,
To love and reverence grew.
Whether, each nightly star to count,
The ancient hills he trod,
Or sought the flowers by stream and fount,
Alike he walked with God.

The graver noon of manhood came,
The full of cares and fears;
One voice was in his heart—the same
It heard through childhood's years.
Amidst fair tents, and flocks, and swains,
O'er his green pasture sod,
A shepherd king on eastern plains,
The patriarch walked with God.

And calmly, brightly, that pure life
Melted from earth away;
No pang it knew, no parting strife,
No sorrowful decay.
He bowed him not, like all beside,
Unto the spoiler's rod,
But joined at once the glorified,
Where angels walk with God.

So let us walk—the night must come
To us that comes to all;
We through the darkness must go home,
Hearing the trumpet's call.
Closed is the path for evermore
Which without death he trod;
Not so that way, wherein of yore,
His footsteps walked with God!

The following beautiful Hymn from the pen of the Rev. Wm. Lisle Bowles (taken from the Amulet for 1826) perhaps will not be unacceptable.

A VILLAGE HYMN.

As by my mother's side I stand,
Whose hairs from age are few and gray,
I watch the hour-glass shed its sand,
To mark how wears the night away.

Her sight is now by years decayed;
The spectacles, to aid her eyes,
Upon the bible leaf are laid,
That open in the window lies.

Though age must many ills endure,
While time for ever speeds away,
This shows her christian comforts sure,
And leads to heaven's eternal day.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. R's Letter is received—W. was too late—Several favours are postponed for want of room.

Printed by F. B. Wright, Swift's Court, Castle Street.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 34. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* OCTOBER 1, 1827.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

We give the following excellent translation (and accompanying notes,) of one of the most striking passages in the prophecies; a passage little understood by common readers, who instead of an army of Locusts, expect, from the description, to find an army of human beings. See Dr. Newcome's Improved Version of the Minor Prophets.

JOEL II.

1 *Blow ye the trumpet in Sion;*
And sound an alarm in mine holy mountain:
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble:
For the day of Jehovah cometh, for it is *near:*
2 *A day of darkness and of gloominess;*
A day of clouds and of thick darkness,
As the dusk spread upon the mountains,
Cometh *a numerous people and a strong.*
Like them there hath not been of old time;
And after them there shall not be,
Even *to the years of many generations.*

1.—*Blow ye the trumpet*] Danger is thus proclaimed, Amos iii. 6. Hos. v. 8. Ezek. xxxiii. 3, 5.

Natural means were used to prevent the devastation of Locusts; pits and trenches were dug, bags were provided, and combustible matter was prepared and set on fire. Shaw's Travels, 4to. p. 187. Sir Hans Sloane's Nat. Hist. of Jamaica, Introduction.

2.—*Of darkness*] Suddenly there came over our heads a thick cloud which darkened the air and deprived us of the rays of the sun. We soon found that it was owning to a cloud of locusts. Adanson's Voyage to Senegal: p. 127. Dublin 12mo. 1759. See more in Bochart on the tenth verse of this chapter, and in Chandler *ib.* where Hermanus is quoted as saying that locusts obscure the sun for the space of a mile; and Aloysius, for the space of twelve miles.

3 *Before them a fire devoureth,*
And behind them a flame burneth:
The land is *as the Garden of Eden before them,*
And behind them a desolate wilderness:
Yea, and nothing shall escape them.
4 *Their appearance* shall be *like the appearance of horses,*
And like horsemen shall they run:
5 *Like the sound of chariots, on the tops of the mountains*
shall they leap:
Like the sound of a flame of fire which *devoureth stubble.*
They shall be *like a strong people set in battle array.*
6 *Before them shall the people be much pained:*
All faces shall gather blackness.
7 *They shall run like mighty men;*
Like warriors shall they climb the wall:
And they shall march every one in his way;

3.—*A fire*] They consume like a general conflagration, "They destroy the ground, not only for the time, but burn trees for two years after. Sir Hans Sloane's Nat. Hist. Jamaica, i. 29.

Wheresoever they feed, their leavings seem as it were parched with fire. Ludolphus: Hist. of Ethiopia. l. i. c. xiii.

—*Nothing shall escape*] viz. which the ground produces. After devouring the herbage, with the fruits and leaves of trees, they attacked even the buds and the very bark. They did not so much as spare the reeds, with which the huts were thatched. Adanson. Sometimes they enter the very bark of trees; and then the spring itself cannot repair the damage. Ludolphus.

4.—*Of horses*] Many writers mention the resemblance which the head of a locust bears to that of a horse, whence the Italians call them Cavalette. Ray on insects. See Rev. ix. 7 and Bochart in loc.

5.—*Like the sound of chariots*]—See Rev. ix. 9. Nahum iii. 2. When these insects fly in company, and in numbers, they make a great noise. They raise themselves up with a noise like to that of a tempest. They devour, gnaw and make bare all the verdure of the fields. The noise they make is like to that of thunder heard at a distance. French Encycl. Sauterelle.—

—*the sound of a flame of fire.*] Cyril says of them that, while they are breaking their food with their teeth, the noise is like that of the flame driven about by the wind. Bochart in loc.

7.—*Like mighty men*] The particles of similitude here, and in v. 4, 5, shew that real locusts are described and not the Assyrian army.

—*in his way*] Many writers mention the order of locusts in their flight and march; and their manner of proceeding directly forward, whatever obstacles were interposed, Jerom, who had seen them in Palestine, says the same.

Neither shall they turn aside from their paths:
Neither shall one thrust another:
They shall march each in his road:
8 *And if they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded*
9 *They shall run to and fro in the city, they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up into the houses:*
They shall enter in at the windows, like a thief.
10 *Before them the earth quaketh, the heavens tremble:*
The sun and the moon are darkened;
And the stars withdraw their shining.
11 *And Jehovah shall utter his voice before his army;*
For his camp is very great:
For he is strong that executeth his word:
For the day of Jehovah is great,
And very terrible. And who shall be able to bear it?

The following is a prophecy of the prosperity that should follow the dreadful calamities which would be occasioned by the locusts

25 *And I will restore unto you the years*
Which the locust hath eaten,
The devouring-locust, the consuming-locust, and the grasshopper;
My great army which I sent among you.

8.—*Upon the sword, they shall not be wounded*] This refers to the scales with which locusts are covered, as with a coat of mail.

10.—*Before them.*] The first hemistich expresses great consternation and calamity. The two other hemistichs may well have a literal sense; see in v. 2. or they may denote in the strong eastern manner, devastation spread through a whole country.

11.—*Shall utter his voice.*] God is sublimely introduced as animating his army by his voice.

25.—*My great army.*] We have here a key to the grand and beautiful description which runs through the first and second chapters of this book. And if we consider the note on v. 7, and the propriety of the adjuncts, as applicable to locusts, and often to locusts only, there can remain no doubt that the prophet is to be understood in a literal sense as foretelling a plague of locusts. Every reader of taste must be struck with the poetical and sublime manner in which the allegory is conducted. There is not a more splended piece of poetry extant.

26 *And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,*
And shall praise the name of Jehovah your God,
Who hath dealt wondrously with you
And my people shall never be ashamed.
27 *And ye shall know that I* am *in the midst of Israel:*
And that *I* am *Jehovah your God, and none else:*
And my people shall never be ashamed.

CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

THE Missionaries and agents of the Society for the conversion of the Jews, have paid another Annual visit to Liverpool. This is the fourth attempt they have made here, we will not say to convert the Jews in this place, we suppose the design of their visit was not for that purpose, if it were so, they seem to have forgot their own design, for we have heard of no converting proofs offered to this people, no arguments adduced which are calculated to have any weight with them. Tales of "heroic deeds," of wonderful conversions near the "rising of the sun;" these stories true or otherwise may induce the good people of England to open their purses, but will never open a way to the heart of one of the sons of Israel.

For ourselves we are of opinion that all the attempts of this society will be fruitless. And indeed we can see no end it would answer could they convert the Jews to their system; to a belief in the doctrines of the Trinity, the incarnation, the Deity of the MAN of Nazareth;—these are not christian doctrines, but doctrines derived from the college of Alexandria, the school of the Platonists. We think the sublime ideas the Jews entertain of their Jehovah, which are inculcated in lofty strains in their sacred writings, will never permit them to stoop so low to regard one who was an infant of days, as the eternal source of existence to all worlds, and all intelligences. Whenever the Jews shall be converted; and that day is not perhaps so far distant as some persons suppose it will be after their return as a people to their

own country; a conversion also to UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY, not to that system, which Jesus would disown, and the Apostles disclaim, and deny that they ever taught any thing like it.

We make the following extracts from a printed (not published) letter, addressed by a learned Jew of Liverpool, "*To the Missionary Preachers assembled at Liverpool, to promote Christianity amongst the Jews, August 28th,* 1827."

After referring to the accounts of conversions in different countries, the writer says:—

"Are then the Jews of Aleppo, Alexandria, &c. so easily converted to christianity by the preaching of one or two solitary missionaries, whilst the Jews of Great Britain remain firm and fixed in their belief, notwithstanding gospel truths flow in such torrents, and hundreds of churches and chapels tower in majestic sanctity in every part of the kingdom? where are such opportunities afforded for conversion as in Great Britain? where has religion found abler champions, or piety formed more eminent examples? where have the operations of the press been carried on with greater energy in forwarding this cause as in Great Britain? where has the Israelite such means of instruction afforded him, where can he have such a prospect of bettering his condition in life, were he inclined for conversion, as in Great Britain? and is it here, where the Jews enjoy liberty and toleration, and have the best examples of christian piety constantly before them, that they remain inflexible in the creed of their ancestors, whilst we are crammed with the reports of wonderful conversions abroad? Is it not astonishing, that in the very spot whence the pensioned pilgrims draw their most substantial means of scattering spiritual gifts over the universe—in this garden of Eden, the source whence the waters of life are drawn,—that the soil shall be barren for conversion, that you shall scarce change the conviction of a single mind, or alter the feelings of a single heart; and yet in foreign parts (as you will persuade us) regeneration shall make such rapid strides, and, like a whirlwind, sweep all before it!

"Are we British Jews then so confused with the abundance of

choice, and the beautiful variety of contending sects, that we are at a loss to know upon which system to fix? or have the clergy of late relaxed in their efforts, and to their eternal shame neglected their Jewish brethren at home, whilst Messrs. Wolf, Moritz, Fisk, King, &c., are so indefatigable abroad, in countries where the Jews deprived of liberty, and wearing a badge of degredation, are persecuted and oppressed; and to whom these missionaries hope to find an easier introduction, than to their brethren situated in happier regions.—Here they suppose opulence cements them and renders them perverse; there they conclude poverty will separate them, and render them pliant to any form that christian enthusiasm may desire.——Of two and twenty thousand Jews living in Great Britain, you find it the most difficult task to grasp at one or two infected with scepticism, who being indifferent to any religion, are willing to be sprinkled, and to crown your anniversary *exhibitions* with their presence, giving a wonderful account of the new feelings with which Baptism has inspired them, and the happy change effected in them, by a belief in the Gospel; whilst in foreign parts you tell us they run after you forsooth, with tears in their eyes, to be made Christians: invite you to preach in their synagogues, surround your houses in such throngs to be saved, that you have frequent recourse to a guard of soldiers to restore peace, that you may administer to each candidate in his turn, the comforts of redemption!

"But this converting system is not of modern invention; for ever since we were driven from our territories, ever since we have been doomed to wander in captivity, we have from time to time been attacked on the score of our religious opinions; sometimes burned or slaughtered, at other times plundered, ruined and banished! In us the Holy Inquisition found the most substantial fuel for devouring flames; in us inhuman Jesuits glutted their ruthless appetites, whilst holiness was their cry, and the crucifix their banner! a defenceless people we were open to every attack, and resistless against every outrage. Christianity was then not as it is at present, promulgated by harmless missionaries, but by the sword, by fire, by rapine and by slaughter. Thanks to heaven

we live in a different age: now the conversion of a solitary Polish Jew in London is hailed with such triumph as to require a public announcement in all the newspapers of so glorious an accession to the strength of christianity; and, like the seldom-seen comet attracts in its revolution the gaze of a staring multitude,—so thousands of credulous enthusiasts flock to the sanctuary to witness this holy Patriarch undergo the first degree of apostacy.—Ushered to the font with all the solemnity of devotion, with the sweetest hymns wafting seraphic zephyrs to his soul, the solemn organ strikes up its powerful tones to lull the struggling conscience of this new-begotten hero of faith, this outcast of Israel. Crossed and sprinkled, he obtains his passport for salvation, and thus ends this mockery of truth and religion—this imposing scene of interested hypocrisy."

The following may be adduced as a proof, that those Jews who think and reason, will never be converted to a system of mystery, and to such jargon as is worked up in the orthodox creed. The writer asks,—

"How can men born of jewish parents and educated in jewish principles, become so quickly identified with the christian community? how can they at one blow sever those truths which must have accumulated strength by reflection, and the philosophy of the jewish system rendered superior by contrast and investigation? You tell us that the new New Testament is the only treasure of salvation and faith the magic charm by which doubt is to be leveled and inquiry checked, that this is the spiritual instrument by which christian doctrines are to be grafted in our minds, whilst every whisper of incomprehensibility is to be hushed by the accommodating reply of mystery, and man's reason pronounced frail in rebelling against absurdity—Do we call in question the miraculous conception, you answer "it is a mystery; the doctrine of the trinity,* the corner stone of christianity is also a mystery; from first to last your new covenant is mysterious, to which we

* This is neither the corner stone, nor any part of the materials of the original edifice; it is the plaister only which has been daubed on the walls, by those who were more fond of show than substance.—*Editor.*

are called upon to give our assent, or in other words to believe and not to comprehend.

"How then are we to credit your report of thousands of Jews abroad soliciting your works that have lately been translated into Hebrew, or that you can *sell* them your tracts and New Testaments, thereby stirring up as you call it, a spirit of enquiry amongst them, which you tell us is sure to end in conviction, and manifest itself by the usual claim for baptism?"

The following is the conclusion of the letter, and calls for the serious attention of the missionaries, and the public:—

"I cannot conclude this address without establishing a criterion whereby the public may judge of your boasted success in evangelizing the Jews, by referring to the reports, that you have printed annually for these fifteen years, each containing a list of the subscribers to your institutions, as well as the names of those who have left you legacies, or have presented you with donations;—In all these lists why do we not find the name of one Jew who has become your subscriber, or has presented you with a donation? Can conversion only build its nest in poverty? Is misery always to be an essential property in the canditate for Baptism? Is indigence always to be the characteristic of your converts, so as to give rise to a new establishment to take them under its wings, and to afford them temporal relief? assuming the pompous title of the Philo-Judæan Society*, a mere decoy for the unwary, or a refuge for the reprobate– forming an auxiliary to the London Society for promoting christianity amongst the Jews, the honourable firm which you represent, both intending to go hand in hand, to run the same race, evangelizing, spiritualizing, and at the same time *realizing* that which gets uppermost in your feelings, and rides upon the whirlwinds of your inflamed imaginations! You have drawn upwards of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds for the purpose of converting us; you come yearly to boast of your success in this heaven-chartered scheme of salvation, and to petition for fresh supplies, announcing that thou-

* Lately established in London, for affording relief to indigent Jews.

sands of my brethren have in foreign parts been brought to the light of the gospel; and yet we look in vain in the list of collections for that proof of their sincerity they would be expected to evince. You tell us that respectable Jews have been converted in Berlin, Konigsberg, Hamburgh, and Amsterdam; and will they not co-operate with you in extending the comforts they have received from you, by supplying you with part of the funds which you are constantly petitioning for in England, and even extort a share from poor miserable Ireland? Would not those respectable Jews, if it were true that you have converted them, be the first to crown your lists with their names, and assist you to diffuse the blessings of salvation? This then is the test for the trial of your pompous announcements and boasting reports, this subscription-list the best means of ascertaining the respectability and sincerity of your converts; and as long as there shall appear the same void of Jewish names, the same blank of contributions from *regenerated* Israelites, the public may feel convinced of the inutility of your exertions, and, by withholding further grants, drive you within the pale of your own sanctuaries, there to exclaim with Isaiah, 'Israel will be saved by Jehovah, an eternal salvation.'"

(Signed) M. SAMUEL.

THE CLAIMS OF THE ISRAELITES TO THE LAND OF CANAAN.

Various opinions have been entertained concerning the right of the Israelites to the land of Canaan, and of their conduct towards the inhabitants, when they entered upon the possession of it. The following extract from Dr. Michaelis, is recommended to the attention of our readers:—

From time immemorial, it had been a land occupied by wandering Hebrew herdsmen, in which even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had exercised the right of proprietorship, traversing it with herds, without being in subjection to any one, or acknowledging the Canaanites as their masters. The Phœnicians, or Canaanites, were certainly not the original possessors of this land, but had at first dwelt on the Red Sea, as Herodotus relates;

with whom Justin and Abulfeda in so far coincide, as that the *former* says, that they had another country before they came to dwell on the Lake of Gennezareth, or Dead Sea; and the latter, that they first dwelt in Arabia. Moses is so far from contradicting Herodotus here, as has been commonly believed, that he rather expressly confirms his account, by twice saying in the history of Abraham, *The Canaanites were then in the land*, Gen. xii. 6. and xiii. 7. The word *then*, cannot imply that the contrary was the case in his own time; for *then* the Canaanites still dwelt in Palestine, and their expulsion only began under his successor, Joshua; so that he gives us clearly to understand, that there had formerly been a time when they dwelt *not in that land*, but somewhere else. But another relation which he gives in Gen. xxxvi. 20,—30. compared with Deut, ii. 12, 22. is still more decisive. He there describes an ancient people, that before the time of Edom, had dwelt in Seir, or as we now call it, Idumea, and whom, from their living in subterraneous caverns, he denominates Horites, or Troglodytes. Of this nation was one of the wives of Esau's, mentioned Gen. xxxvi. 2, 24, and as Moses elsewhere relates that Esau had *three* wives, two of Canaanitish descent, and the third a grand-daughter of Abraham, (Gen. xxvi. 34, 35. and xxviii. 8, 9,) it evidently follows, that the Horites who of old inhabited Idumea, must have been Canaanites. Consequently the Canaanites originally dwelt in the region afterwards called Idumea, and on the Red Sea; but when they began to carry on the commerce of the world, for which they became so renowned in history, they migrated into Palestine, the situation of which was peculiarly advantageous for that pupose. It would appear, that at first they only established trading marts and factories, which could not but be very acceptable to the wandering hordes, because they gave them an opportunity of converting their superfluous produce into money, and of purchasing foreign commodities. By degrees, they spread themselves farther into the country, improved the lands, planted vineyards, and at last dispossessed the ancient inhabitants; just exactly as their descendants did at Carthage, who first asked for a hide-breadth of ground whereon to sit, and then by an artful explanation, got a bargain of as much room as was sufficient to build a city on, and in the end made themselves masters of the whole country. As early as Abraham's time, complaints were made of the herds not having sufficient room, from the Canaanites being then in the land, and crowding it. But this always went on farther and farther; and when the Israelites had for a time gone down to Egypt, the Canaanites at last appropriated to themselves the whole country. This land of their forefathers, and their nation, the Israelites had never given up to the Canaanites; and therefore they had a right to re-claim it, and to re-conquer it, by force. If they solicited from other nations a passage into Palestine, it was merely to come at their own property again; and

when they passed the Jordan, and found the Canaanites in arms against them, the latter had no longer a legitimate cause to maintain, for they wanted to keep possession of the property of another people by force.

It cannot even be here objected, that the Israelites, by their descent into Egypt, had abandoned their right, or that they lost it by prescription. They went down to Egypt only for a time, on acconnt of a famine; and it was with the hope and determination of returning again, as the divine promise given to Jacob, Gen. xlvi. 4, confirms. I do not here inquire into, or draw any conclusion from, the divinity of the promise; it is sufficient for me that, whether true or false, Jacob gave out, that he had in a vision such a promise made him; because it proves the certainty of his having it in view, and making no secret of it, that his posterity should one day go back to Palestine. Whether prescription holds among nations, the single case excepted, where possession goes back to times of which history gives no certain account, and where of course, in default of other deductions, prescription does interfere; and again, how long a period may be requisite to prescription in the law of nature and nations, (longer, no doubt, than in civil law) I will not here stop to enquire; for prescription cannot operate at all where a peopie avow and maintain their rights with sufficient publicity; and this was done by the Israelites. Jacob went down into Egypt with a conviction that his descendants should, under the divine guidance, return to Palestine; nor would he allow himself to be buried anywhere else than in his own hereditary sepulchre in Palestine, exacting from his son Joseph an oath for that purpose, (Gen. xvii. 29—31.) And his burial was conducted with such solemnity, (Gen. l. 7—13.) that the people in Palestine could not possibly entertain a doubt of the intention of the Israelites to return thither at some future period. But were the matter considered still as somewhat doubtful, because Moses does not expressly mention this as the reason of Jacob's desire to be carried thither; on the occasion of the death of Joseph, it is placed in the clearest light. For he testifies to his brethren, his certain hope that God would re-conduct their posterity into Palestine; and therefore he desired not to be buried in Egypt, but begged that his body might, after the ancient Egyptian manner, remain uninterred, while they continued there, and be carried with the people at their general return into the promised land, and laid in the sepulchre of his fathers. Such was his anxiety on these points, that he made his brethren swear that they would carefully attend to them; and accordingly we find, that when he died, they did not bury him, but, as was not unusual among the Egyptians, let him remain embalmed in his coffin, until their descendants, at their departure for Palestine, carried his remains along with them, Gen. l. 24—36. Exod. xiii. 19. Could a people have given a stronger proof of their *animus revertendi*, and that they had not for ever abandoned their ancient country? Was it necessary (I think not) that they should have sent a notary

every thirty-three years, to protest against the forfeiture of their rights? Even the Egyptians well knew the expectations of the Israelites on this head; and that was the principal reason of their oppressions towards a people that were not to remain for ever within their country, and in subjection to them. For although from the first they did not intend to let them go, yet they were afraid, from the rapid increase of their numbers, that if a war took place, they might side with the enemy, and not perhaps conquer the country, but depart from it; or, as the proper expression is, *go up*: for we must recollect, that to go from Egypt to Palestine, was in the idiom of the Hebrews, *to ascend*; and, *vice versa*, from Palestine to Egypt, was *to descend*. From the representation we have now given of the origin of the war, it will be easy to perceive (what to a reader of the Mosaic history must otherwise appear at first very strange) why Moses did not attack the Canaanites beyond Jordan; but from Og, king of Bashan, and Sihon, king of the Amorites, requested nothing more than an unmolested passage, and only had recourse to arms when, instead of granting it, they marched hastily into the wilderness to meet him, and offered him battle. The reason was manifestly this, that the Israelites laid no claim to the country beyond Jordan, but only to the pasture-grounds that from time immemorial had belonged to the Hebrew herdsmen, and which their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had actually occupied with their cattle.

"But might they not at least have left to the Canaanites those trading cities which had been built without opposition from their ancestors? This question is easily answered. If a foreign people, whom we permit to establish factories and trading cities in our land, shall so abuse our generosity, as to dispossess us, and gradually to appropriate to themselves our whole country; and when we wish to return to our ancient abode, shall meet us with arms in their hands, in order to prevent it; and shall, finally, have become so extremely wicked, as to render it impossible for us to live with them, without having our morals corrupted—we certainly are under no obligation to leave to them these factories and trading cities, and thereby expose ourselves anew to the risk of such corruption.

"But" (yet a but) "were not the Israelites in duty bound first to send heralds and formally demand their lands again from the Canaanites? This question I must leave completely unanswered, partly because it belongs to the yet much controverted point whether certain solemnities are or are not necessary at the commencement of a war, by way of declaration, and particularly, because we do not know whether Moses and Joshua did so or not.

The learned professsor says in a note; "Even before Abraham received a commandment from God to go to Palestine, his father, with his family, and some other persons, had, of their own accord, set out from

Mesopotamia with their numerous herds, in their way to that country." See Gen. xi. 31.

"That Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not live in Palestine, as subjects, is manifest from every glance at their history, Abraham had 318 servants, born in his house, who were trained to the use of arms, Gen. xiv. 14; he had no doubt a greater number of other servants. He actually carried on war with five kings, petty kings, I grant. These kings had not at all attacked that part of the country where Abraham resided; but in another quarter of Palestine had made his nephew Lot, who like himself was a wandering herdman, prisoner, with the rest of the inhabitants; and this was his rsason for engaging in the war. But it shows that he was any thing but a subject."—*Mich. Com. on the Laws of Moses.*

QUESTIONS TO TRINITARIANS.

Axiom—One Nature constitutes and forms one being—The Human Nature forms a man—the Divine Nature God.

1 If Christ then had two distinct and separate natures; the human and the divine, was he not two distinct and separate *beings*, a man and a God?

2 If he was not two beings, a man and a God, then he could not have two natures the divine and human, since each of these forms one being?

3 If he *was* two beings, then did one or both of these beings die?

4 If only one, which of them?

5 If the human nature or being, then as this being was only part of Christ, does it not follow that only part of Christ died?

6 And then is it not false that "*God* came down to die for us?"

7 And then too as only a human being died, what becomes of a divine sacrifice?

8 If both these natures died, then the godhead or divine nature died? and what then becomes of the ground of our religion that God is incapable of suffering and eternally happy?

1 If the godhead was limited to the manhood of Christ, was it the nature of the Son or the nature of the whole Trinity?

2 If of the Son only then the whole godhead was not united but only part of it? then too the divine nature must be divisible, and consequently corporeal. And then too Jesus Christ having only part of the divine nature, was not *perfect* and entire God.

3 If the whole godhead, the nature of the entire Trinity was united to man, then does it follow, that the Father, the Son and the Spirit were all incarnate, and that Christ was not the Son but the Father also.

5 And then may we not believe as a necessary consequence that our salvation was not purchased by the Son only, but that the whole Trinity suffice to procure it, and is not this contrary to the Trinitarian faith?

CATHOLIC AND CALVINSTIC DISCUSSION AT BIRMINGHAM.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

It may probably be interesting both to you and your readers to be made acquainted with the following circumstances, which have recently occurred in this town:—In the course of the last month a public discussion took place between the Rev. T. M. M'Donnell, a Catholic Priest of this town, and the Rev. J. Burnett, a Protestant Minister of Cork. The subject was, the Rule of Faith as admitted among Catholics and Protestants respectively, including on the part of the former the assumed infallibility of the Catholic Church, and on the part of the latter the right of private judgment, with the consequences resulting therefrom. At the present time, when we have recently witnessed synods of *dissenters* attempting to impose tests on their christian brethren, and to shackle the free exercises of their understanding, it is gratifying to behold the Rev. J. Burnett, a Calvinistic Minister, point to the sacred scriptures as his sole guide in matters of faith, and assert the right of every individual, by the free exercise of his judgment, to ascertain the meaning of the sacred volume for himself—he repeatedly and explicitly asserted, that he never could believe *that* which he could not understand; and that his faculties as a rational creature would induce him to protest against a belief of *that*, of which we had not a distinct perception, and of which we had not also evidence.

In reply, the Rev. T. M. M'Donnell called on Mr. Burnett to show, on the foregoing principles, how the doctrine of the Trinity and Original Sin were articles of his belief. Mr. B. stated, that he was not then going to lose his half hour, by proving the doctrine of the Trinity; but he expressed his readiness at another time to do so, should he be required. In consequence of this, a number of Unitarian Christians, a few days after, met and transmitted to the Rev. Gentleman the following Letter:—

"REVEREND SIR,—As Christians and Protestants, we beg leave to congratulate you on your late exertions on behalf of the

right of private judgment, and the sufficiency of the scriptures as a rule of faith and practice. We heard with pleasure your avowal of the principle 'that it is impossible for man to believe any proposition of which he has not a clear and distinct idea;' and it is this conviction, pervading our minds, which has led us to the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity. Whilst you regard this as a fundamental doctrine of the gospel, we cannot but consider it as opposed alike to the dictates of right reason and the plainest declaration of the sacred volume; and that it can only be maintained on the ruins of the principle which you have so distinctly laid down.

"You will, Sir, remember that in your late discussion, when pressed by the Rev. T. M. M'Donnell to show how you could believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, seeing that it cannot possibly be understood, and asked how you would prove it to the Unitarian, you declared that although you were determined not to lose the half hour then allowed you in defending that doctrine, yet, you were ready to do so on another occasion. As you made this declarition to the public, we now respectfully take leave to call upon you to redeem your pledge before *that* public, and shall be happy to appoint one of our own body to meet you to discuss this momentous and important question—convinced, as we are, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the only living and true God, and the only proper object of religious worship; and that our faith is founded upon the most unequivocal testimony of the scriptures, as well as approved by the noblest faculties of the mind. Waiting your reply,

I have the honor to remain, Rev. Sir,

On behalf of the meeting,

Your very obedient servant,

J. W. EVANS."

Birmingham, August 11*th*, 1827.

Mr. Burnett received our communication very politely, expressed himself friendly to the free discussion of religious opinions, convinced as he said he was, that truth would ultimately gain by it; he admired the feeling which had actuated the Unitarians to

step forwards, and informed them verbally that he would have been happy to have met them on the subject, had not the very limited stay he should make in Birmingham, being only six or seven days longer entirely prevented him. But this six or seven days, was prolonged to *above three times* that period, without his signifying in the least, his desire of complying with the request made to him—I am induced to give publicity to these proceedings through the medium of your useful little work, in order to show, that, while Trinitarians in their controversies with Catholics, are happy to avail themselves of those principles and arguments, on which the Unitarian relies for the defence of his faith, yet they evidently shrink from the application of those principles of arguments, against themselves. With the full persuation of the importance of religious discussion and the firm conviction that the cause of truth will ultimately triumph.

I remain, yours respectfully,

E. W. NIAS.

Birmingham, September 13*th*, 1827.

N. B. *The forgoing particulars were inserted in the Birmingham Journal of September* 1*st, and on the ensuing week the following anonymous, uncharitable letter appeared.*

"UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS.

"To the Editor of the Birmingham Journal.

"MR. EDITOR,

"I presume that the christian public approve of the Rev. J. Burnett's conduct in declining for the present the challenge of the Birmingham Unitarians. But whenever the Reverend Gentleman can make it convenient, to accept the challenge, I dare say he feels confident of coming off victoriously and triumphantly; for his cause his good,—I am at a loss to understand, why the Birmingham Unitarians should style themselves Unitarian *Christians*; they may be Unitarians in the same sense as Mahomedans, Jews, and Deists are so, but Christians they cannot be, for this obvious reason, because they deny and do away with the very essentials of Christianity. They may

expect that Unitarianism will gain by a public discussion, but I think the necessary exposure of their system in public, must have a contrary effect: such a discussion will show how unscriptural and antichristian the Unitarian system is, and so the truth which they deny, we will ultimately gain.—

"I have Mr. Editor examined with attention the arguments for, and against Unitarianism, and can venture to say that the whole body of Unitarians are not able to produce any arguments in defence of their system, but those hackneyed ones employed by their predecessors, from the days of Cerinthus to the time of Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham; which have been most triumphantly and completely refuted again and again, from the days of St. John, to the days of Bishops Bull, Horsley, Burgess, Alp, Magee, Dr. P. Smith, Wardlaw, and others. Truth is great—it has, it will, and must prevail.

"I am told Mr. Editor, that Unitarians generally pride themselves on their liberality, candour and benevolence: far be it from me to question their claim to such good qualities in many instances, but I beg leave to observe, that in one respect they act illiberal, uncandid, and malevolent, in usurping the name of Christians, when they disclaim and deny the fundamentals of Christianity. Let them renounce the name of Christians, and then they would be more consistent; and their system would be in a fair and clear light, clarified and purified from the peculiar and distinguished doctrines of the Christian Religion."

I am, Mr. Editor, yours, &c.

PHILALETHES."

The above unwarrantable and illiberal letter, is evidently from the pen of some ignorant, vulgar, hot-headed bigot, and from the cowardly manner in which it was produced, it was judged to be most prodent to treat it with that silent contempt it deserves.

E. W. N.

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

(Continued from page 295.)

THE COMMUNION.

A direction immediately after the Nicene Creed.

"Nothing shall be proclaimed or published in the church, during the time of divine service, but by the minister; nor by him any thing but what is prescribed in the rules of this book, or enjoined by the King, or by the ordinary of the place,"

So, whatever doctrines or prayers a King of England (who may, were it possible, happen to be an impious and licentious character) shall decree to be delivered in the house of God, the ministers of the church, as by law established, are bound to read to the people, and at a time, too, when they assemble to take the Lord's Supper! Who gave the King this prerogative? Did our Saviour, or his apostles? Certainly not. We are on the contrary, told in the language of the scriptures, that one is our master even Christ; and that we are to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God, the things which are God's. Let no man, then, be his station ever so eminent, presume to dictate to the ministers of the gospel, what they are to teach and inculcate; lest he be found to oppose himself against God, and interfere with an authority to which he ought submissively to bow. They are not amenable, in their official capacity, to any human tribunal; for it is their duty to "preach not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth their hearts." And they are not to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men;" consequently, they are not to submit to any human impositions, be the station of the individual, claiming such a prerogative, whatever it may

When the minister giveth warning for the celebration of the holy communion, &c,—he shall read this exhortation following.

"Dearly beloved, on——day next, I purpose through God's assistance to administer to all such as shall be religiously and devoutly disposed, the most comfortable Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, to be by them received, in remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion; whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven."

Have we not here the doctrine of transubstantiation? or, at least, would not every Roman Catholic understand the words in this sense?

Why do church ministers, if shocked at such a doctrine, give their congregations every month to understand, that bread and wine *are* the body and blood of Christ? This is another inconsistency.

Again: though "the religious and the devout," are exhorted to communicate, yet if the wicked and profane present themselves before the minister, to qualify for any office under government, he dare not refuse to adminster to them the holy ordinance. And thus the institution is prostituted to sordid and political purposes, and may be bandied about at the mere will and pleasure of the vilest of men! Oh, shame to the Church, that tolerates such a profanation!

Lastly; where do the Scriptures teach us that we can alone obtain remission of our sins, by the cross and passion of Christ? Do they not, on the contrary, every where inculcate, that we must alone depend upon repentance, amendment, and the free grace of God? See especially the heart-cheering parable of the prodigal son.

"Which being so divine and comfortable a thing to them who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them that will presume to receive it unworthily; &c."

Here, an allusion is made to 1 Cor. xi. 29, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (rather, condemnation,) to himself." But all that the apostle meant by these words, was evidently this, viz. that if any person acted improperly at the time they were taking the Lord's Supper, such as eating in a gluttonous manner, or drinking till they became intoxicated, (which was the case sometimes with many of the Corinthians when they partook of this ordinance,) they would eat and drink in a way unbecoming their christian profession, and bring upon themselves the condemnation of their neighbours and countrymen. For when the heathens found the christians were addicted to such vices, they would naturally consider them hypocrites, and refuse to become their converts. Such conduct also, would be a gross abuse of a sacred institution; and those who were guilty of it, would, on reflection, be self-condemned. But there can be no danger, in the present day, of making the Lord's Supper a riotous bacchanalian feast. And, therefore, none need be discouraged, by the words of the apostle, from engaging in this ordinance; as all that he says on the subject, is applicable to a particular case of flagrant abuse.

And what sincere professing christian, can resist the command of his master, "This do in remembrance of me?"

"These words (Holy Father) must be omitted on Trinity Sunday."

As if God was not the Holy Father on trinity sunday, as much as at any other time.

"Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name."

There is no foundation either in reason or scripture, to suppose that

there is a host of ministering spirits employed in the manner as mentioned in this prayer. "The whole doctrine concerning angels (says Sale) Mohammed and his disciples have borrowed from the Jews, who learned the names and offices of these beings from the Persians, as themselves confess." In fact, the word *angel* signifies messenger, and is frequently applied to men and the operations of nature. If the term archangel is to be found in the scriptures, it must mean a *superior* messenger. (For a refutation of the received notions of angelic beings, see Simpson's admirable Essays on scripture language.)

"Who art one God, one Lord; not one only person, but three persons in one substance. For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality."

Jesus Christ used very different language from this absurd declaration. "My Father is greater than I;" "I can of mine own self do nothing." and a hundred similar expressions, are the proofs which Christ gave of his subordination to the God of heaven and earth.

PURGATOR.

(To be Continued.)

THE GLEANER.

"WE CULL THE CHOICEST."

MYSTERY.

We copy the following highly-finished picture of Mystery, from a Pamphlet lately published in Dublin, entitled "The doctrine of the Trinity founded neither on Scripture, nor on Reason and Common Sense; but on Tradition and the Infallible Church," from the pen of Dr. Drummond:

"Mystery is a being of magical power in theology, a reconciler of absurdities, and the inseparable companion of priestcraft, fanaticism, and superstition. She would willingly be received as a descendant of the skies; but in features, dress, manners, and language, she betrays more of an origin from below. There is no spark of heaven in her eye. She wants the cloudless brow, and the voice of celestial music. Her mantle is a pall, and she wears an amulet of dead men's bones.—Truth, the real daughter of heaven, delights to walk abroad in the full blaze of day—but mystery "loves darkness better than light, because her deeds are evil." She creeps into her labyrinths of woods and caves to mutter her spells, and pore over her hieroglyphics; while reason is reading the attributes of God in the volume of nature, in the

starry letters of the firmament, and the luminous page of inspiration. Mystery detests such words as reason and common sense, and calls them carnal and unchristian. She deems it presumptuous to utter them along with her "peculiar doctrines," which are a tissue of paradoxes, contradictions, and impossibilities; and gladly would she exclude them by an *index expurgatorius* from all pious vocabularies. Over the weak, the ignorant, and all whom the prejudices of custom and education have subjected to her controul, she exercises a tyrannical domination. But men who know and dare to assert their rights, will neither be silenced nor spell-bound by her terrors. They burst into the unhallowed circle which she draws around her, and with the light of reason and of gospel truth, dispel the mists in which she is shrouded, and expose her impositions to the scorn they merit."

AMERICAN UNITARIANISM.

An excellent Sermon was preached at Charleston, on the morning of July 1st, 1827. By the Rev. M. J. Motte, who was educated in and for the Orthodox Episcopal Church of that country, but who from the study of the Scriptures is become a Unitarian. The text is 1 John, v. 1.—"He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

As the Sermon is reprinting in Liverpool, and will be published in a cheap form in the course of a few days, we shall content ourselves with giving the following brief extract:—

"I would now humbly confine your attention to the singleness of the profession indispensable to Christian communion. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. The acknowledgment of his *divine authority* constitutes a christian, as far as belief is concerned. Other points are of great, but yet of secondary importance: his miracles, prophecies, resurrection, &c. are subservient to this conviction—they prove him to be the Messiah. All who hold this, if God be true, hold the head.

"Among other advantages of the simplicity of this creed, we have to thank God for being furnished in it with an easy and intelligible principle of union which might bind all Christendom together, round the globe and through all time. We know who is a brother in Christ. I ask not assent to perplexing dogmas expressed in the language of men. I inquire not whether you have studied metaphysics. I do not reservedly draw back, until I have taken the gage with my measure of the length and breadth and depth of your theological system, and weighed in my balance the results of your inquiries in what does not touch the Supreme authority of the Gospel. But, brother, believest thou in Christ? and I take you by the hand, and we are one already in what lies nearest to our hearts."

ST. ANTHONY'S DIVINITY.

Matt. xi. 29.—*Take my yoke.*

THIS celebrated Saint compares the apostles to oxen, and in his sermon on the above text, he gives seven reasons for his opinion, of which the following are some.

1.—Because the apostles went by pairs like oxen. Separate me Paul and Barnabas.

2.—Because an ox is a strong and laborious animal; so says Paul, I labored more abundantly than all.

3.—The ox spends little though it labors much. One of the apostles says, "having food and raiment let us be therewith content." But some prelates in our day are *palfreys*, who spend much and labor little.

4.—Because the ox hath two horns: and that which answers, in the apostles to these two horns, is doctrine and life. Whence that preacher is but an unicorn who has but one of these. With this horn the preacher ought to blow, that is, with good doctrine in preaching, which, yet often profits but little, unless it be accompanied with the other horn, that is, good life.

5.—Because there is nothing in the ox unprofitable: so neither in the life of the apostles. Of the hide of the one shoes are made, and from the conversation of the apostles an example is taken which fortifies the affections as a shoe does the foot. Canticles vii. 1. "How beautiful are thy goings in shoes."

*** *What a fine authority are the fathers in matters of religion.*

Obituary.

The Rev. Robert Little, formerly of Gainsborough, England.

A mail from Harrisburg has brought the mournful tidings of the death of the Rev. ROBERT LITTLE, Pastor of the Unitarian Church of this city. He left us on the first of this present month, on a journey of recreation and health with his family. He was in usual good health at the time of his departure, except a little exhausted with the severe labors of his calling. His professional duties were uncommonly severe—preaching every Sunday twice, and attending to many other matters of industry through the week. The immediate cause of his death is said to have been an exposure to the oppressive heat of the sun for several days, on this journey to the place of his death; and added to which he preached on Sunday last at Harrisburg, not more than forty-eight hours before his premature departure from this world.

Mr. Little was a native of England, and had been a preacher in that country before his arrival in this city, which was about eight years since. For more than seven years past he has been building up a flock in this place; not by zealous or overstrained efforts, but by those slow and sure degrees which give permanency to labour, and success to perseverance. He was of a high order of mind, uniting great simplicity with great energy; literary and scientific, he brought no ordinary stores of learning to support his creed, and to adorn his professional productions; a sincere searcher after truth, he reasoned with the fearlessness and warmth of an Apostle; full in the belief of his own course of thinking, he treated the opinions of others with great candor and tenderness, and never attempted to remove an honest prejudice, unless he could supply a refreshing truth to fill its place. He discussed every topic with freedom, boldness and decision, as one who had come to a conclusion satisfactory to himself; but carried himself with all meekness and humility to his God and Father. He found among his admirers and friends, some of all creeds—from those of the Church of Rome to the followers of Whitefield and Wesley; and if they could not acknowledge all his religious sentiments to be just, they were ready to bear testimony to the sincerity of his faith, and the purity of his character.

Such was his fame as a preacher, that every Sunday might be seen among his congregation many of highly cultivated intellects, who on entering his church door made a mental protest against his tenets, but joined in the general admiration of his talents, and the splendour of his productions. His acquirements were extensive as a scholar, and he supported his reasonings with ample stores of theological learning. His eloquence was without cant, or trick, or affectation; plain, sensible, strong and attractive. He sometimes alarmed the timid by the stateliness and vigor of his march in support of his favourite theories of duty and religion; but in the very fervor of his zeal he discovered the spirit of subdued affections amidst the exalted properties of a commanding intellect. Never were a people more attached to their teacher and spiritual guide, than the parishoners of Mr. Little were to him. In the literary and scientific portion of society, his loss will long be felt in this city. He was the most active mind in the Columbian Institute and was devising and carrying into effect by the weight of his character, and judicious exertions, liberal things for that institution. Under his fostering hand the Botanic Garden had begun to flourish, and much was expected from his perseverance. Identified with all associations for improving the city, and the minds of the citizens, it might be said he was beloved and respected by all. The loss of such a man cannot be calculated in a growing society: and the only consolation that we can find, is in the belief that the Governor of the world does all things for the good of his children.

National Intelligencer, Washington City, D. C. August, 1827.

POETRY.

From Heber's Hymns.

"Lo! the lilies of the field,
How their leaves instruction yield!
Hark, to Nature's lesson given
By the blessed birds of Heaven!
Every bush and tufted tree
Warbles sweet Philosophy;
'Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow:
God provideth for the morrow!'

Say, with richer crimson glows
The kingly mantle than the rose?
Say, have kings more wholesome fare
Than we, poor citizens of air?
Barns nor hoared grain have we,
Yet we carol merrily;
Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow!
God provideth for the morrow!

One there lives whose guardian eye
Guides our humble destiny:
One there lives, who, Lord of all,
Keeps our feathers lest they fall.
Pass we blithely then the time,
Fearless of the snare and lime;
Free from doubt and faithless sorrow—
God provideth for the morrow!"

From Heber's Hymns.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! enthroned once on high,
Thou favour'd home of God on earth, thou Heaven below the sky!
Now brought to bondage with thy sons, a curse and grief to see,
Jerusalem, Jerusalem! our tears shall flow for thee.

Oh! hadst thou known thy day of grace, and flock'd beneath the wing,
Of Him who call'd thee lovingly, thine own anointed King,
Then had the tribes of all the world gone up thy pomp to see,
And glory dwelt within thy gates, and all thy *sons* been free!

And who art thou that mournest me? replied the ruin grey,
And fear'st not rather that thyself may prove a castaway?
I am a dried and abject branch, my place is given to thee,
But woe to every barren graft of thy wild olive tree!

Our day of grace is sunk in night, our time of mercy spent,
For heavy was my children's crime, and strange their punishment;
Yet gaze not idly on our face, but, sinner, warned be,
Who spared not his chosen seed, may send his wrath on thee!

Our day of grace is sunk in night, thy noon is in its prime,
Oh turn and seek thy Saviour's face, in this accepted time!
So, Gentile, may Jerusalem a lesson prove to thee,
And in the new Jerusalem thy home for ever be."

THE SCEPTIC AND CHRISTIAN.

From the Monthly Repository.

Toss'd on the world's wide sea of storms,
How helpless toils the Sceptic's bark!
No ardent faith the region warms,
The course is rough—the way is dark!
He views no beacon light on high,
No pilot's skillful hand is nigh,
But doubt stands trembling at the helm,
Till bursting waves the bark o'erwhelm.

See, where the Christian bends his way!
Though wildest tempests swell around,
He follow heav'n's directing ray,
Which points where safety's port is found.
Fearless, he steers as God commands,
From passion's rocks, and pleasure's strands
Hope cheers his spirits through the strife,
And bears him on to endless life.

Birmingham. H. H.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Liverpool.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—Jesus.

No. 35. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* NOVEMBER 1, 1827.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Remarks on various passages of Scripture, from "An Essay towards a New Translation of the Scriptures,"—p. 301—304.

"Our versions make Paul desire Timothy to bring him the cloak which he left at Troas, and to justify this translation, it is said, that in ancient MSS. there is a word which signifies a cloak. That the Apostle desires Timothy to come before winter; that he desired to have his father's consular cloak to keep him in remembrance of him; or that it might have been the cloak of some great consul, who laid it at the Apostle's feet to sell for the poor's use; but the very naming of that reason is enough to refute it. Others think that the Apostle desires to bring him his chest of books, and observe that most Greek copies have a word which has always this signification, and never signifies a cloak. That it is not probable that the Apostle had left his cloak behind him, or if he had, that there could be no necessity of sending for it so far; that books were then very rare, and especially good copies of the bible, which probably was one of the books which he kept within that chest; that the Syriack version has two words in this place, which signify the house of books, that is, in the style of the Eastern people, and particularly the Hebrews, Chaldeans, and Syrians, a chest or packet of books; and that the great etymologist, Suidas, does not render the word which is in the original otherwise. We must therefore translate, *The chest of books, which I left at Troas, bring with thee, &c.*'

"The word in the original, which we translate to Justify, has given occasion to one of the most considerable controversies of

the two last ages, as well as that which we translate Faith. For the first signifies sometimes to absolve a criminal, and sometimes to condemn him; sometimes to make one just, by inspiring justice in him, or by giving him means and occasions to become just: this is granted on all hands. The word Faith signifies a bare persuasion which one has of a thing, and sometimes also the effects that should follow from such a persuasion; sometimes the trust or confidence which we have in a person, and sometimes the object of our belief or confidence. A translator therefore should necessarily stick to the signification which those words ought to have, according to the subject and circumstances where they are employed; and if they had done this, that famous dispute had been soon ended."

"It is said, that after Theudas, rose up Judas of Galilee, Acts v. 37. But Josephus the historian tells us, that Judas the Galilean was several years before Theudas, having lived in the reign of the Emperor Augustus. It is therefore probable that the verses are not rightly distinguished, and that the words *after him*, (as the original hath it) should be added to the 36th verse, thus: ——— *who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered and brought to nought after him*, which is very true."

"Some of the more moderate divines make fine reflections on the modesty and charity of the Apostles that would not say that Judas was damned, but that he went to his own place, without daring to decide the matter. Others again think, that this expression denotes that Judas must have a particular place of damnation, because of the exceeding heinousness of his crime; but if we consider the original a little, we shall find that the words don't regard Judas, but Matthias, and that they should be rendered thus: *Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take possession of this ministry and apostleship*, (from which Judas by transgression fell) *and go to his own place or office*, each

Apostle having his particular jurisdiction, or office, as Norton Knatchbull has very well observed."

"We find in all versions a fault which borders on blasphemy. The disciples of our Saviour, or his nearest relations, are represented as going to lay hands on him, and saying, *He is beside himself*, Mark iii. 21. Some interpreters seeing that this is injurious to our Saviour, think the words may be rendered, *He is in a swoon:* others attribute this saying to his enemies; others that it signifies only, *He is gone out.* But all this is not capable to remove the difficulty. We mast therefore consider, that St. Matthew, relating the same history, observes that it was the multitude who were beside themselves, and ravished with admiration at the sight of our Saviour's miracles; and St. Luke makes the same remark, employing a word which always signifies to be ravished with admiration. This verse then should be translated,—*Those who belonged to him seeing this, went out to suppress them,* (the multitude) *for they said they are beside themselves.*"

PSALM XXIII.

We have been favoured with the following translation and notes, by a Hebrew friend, who has kindly promised to furnish us occasionally with others of a similar nature.

A SONG FOR DAVID.

JEHOVAH is my shepherd, I shall not fail.

In beautiful pastures he causeth me to lie down.

He conducteth me beside the waters of rest.

He causes my soul to revive.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for the sake of his name.

Even if I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they shall comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointeth my head with oil; my cup overfloweth.

O that goodness and mercy may follow me all the days of my life, that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah for a length of days.

NOTES.

In the first five verses he beautifully describes the peace and plenty he experiences under the superintendance of Jehovah, whom he calls his shepherd. Turbulent waters, in the language of scripture, denote the agitations and passions of the human breast; but the still waters, or, as the Hebrew expresses it, the waters of rest, indicate the pleasant and tranquil state of the soul when led by God as its shepherd, and feels his vivifying influence. The Hebrew word, has been translated to bring back, to restore; but the word revive, or a turning back from a hopeless desponding state, will better express the meaning of the Psalmist.

In 6th verse, thy rod and thy staff, must be understood, the shepherd's rod or staff, as we find in Micah, vii. 14,—"Feed the people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the woods; in the midst of Carmel let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

In 7th verse, preparing a table is a figurative expression of God's supplying him with abundance. Wisdom is personified in Proverbs ix. 2, as spreading her table. We also find the same words used in Psalm lxxviii. 19,—"Yea, they spake against God; they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness?"

The translation of the last verse differs from any other, as making the dwelling in his house the consequence of God's mercy and benevolence; but perhaps will be found on investigation to agree with what the Psalmist so often aspires to in most of his prayers. As if he had said: Oh, that the benevolence and mercy of heaven would for ever influence me to dwell in his sanctuary.—As we read in Psalm xxxvii. 4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord," &c. Also in Psalm lxxxiv. 5, "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still be praising thee." For God's goodness and mercy he often prays. Psalm iv. 6, "Many say, who will show us any good? Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us." Psalm xxxvi. 10, "O continue thy mercy unto them that know thee."

ON BAPTISM.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

IN the Reflector for September I find the following remarks, "As the baptism of John, to which Jesus submitted, was not a christian ordinance, christianity not being then introduced, and as we are no where in the New Testament told that he submitted to baptism, to set us an example, or referred to baptism as a precedent which we ought to follow, we can have no authority to make use of his baptism as furnishing an argument in favour of the perpetuity of baptism, we must find some better evidence of its designed perpetuity, or give up that point as incapable of defence."

Were we to support the doctrine and obligation of any ceremony or mode of conduct merely by his example, we should not only be obliged to submit to circumcision, but likewise to fasting, and to crucifixion, we should also cast out demons, give sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, banish every species of sickness, and cause the rotting putrifying corpse to rise from the grave in its pristine health and vigour by an all-powerful dictum: hence it is rational to conclude that his baptism cannot of itself be considered as sufficiently proving the obligation of the baptismal ordinance; but we think that there are higher and stronger proofs of its obligation: "If ye love me," says our divine teacher "keep my commandment." "He who hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is who loveth me; and he who loveth me shall be loved by my father." "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him. He who loveth me not, keepeth not my words." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever things I command you." The following is one of the commandments given by him who spoke not his own words, but the words of his father and our father, of his God and our God; "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," by which we are given to understand that all ought to be baptized and taught the belief of the "One God the Father," a knowledge of whose attributes and will have been revealed unto us by his Son "the man Christ Jesus," the truth of whose preaching was testified by the Holy Spirit, i. e. the miraculous powers conferred on Jesus and his apostles by their Father, "the only true God."—Paul meeting with some of John's disciples at Ephesus, said to them, "John indeed baptized with the baptism of repentance; saying to the people,

that they should believe in him who was to come after him, that is, in Christ Jesus. And when they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." Hence we are led to believe in the obligation of baptism as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us and ordained by Christ himself.

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EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION.

From a Sermon preached at Salem, November 16, 1826,

By Charles W. Upham.

THE first principle of the Reformers, which we shall notice, is that *the scriptures are in themselves a sufficient rule of faith and duty.* Calvin expressly says that "no preacher can require explicit belief to what he utters, *only to the word of God in the scriptures.*" The same author, in his celebrated dedication of his Institutes to Francis I., has the following remarks concerning the use of the fathers and of human authorities in general. "While we make use of their writings, we always remember that all things are ours to serve us, not to have dominion over us, and that we are Christ's alone, and owe him universal obedience. He who neglects this distinction will have nothing decided in religion; since those holy men were ignorant of many things, frequently at variance with each other, and sometimes even inconsistent with themselves." Zwingle, who has probably with justice, been called "the brightest ornament of the Protestant cause," and the "first among the reformers both in order of time, and in order of merit," bears testimony in the strongest language to this principle. "The scripture," says he "explains itself, and has no need of an interpreter. If men understand it ill, it is because they read it amiss. It is always consistent with itself, and the spirit of God acts by it so strongly, that all readers may find the truth there, provided they seek it with a sincere and

humble heart." The opinion of Luther on this point, can be seen in a very characteristic letter which he wrote to Melanchthon, urging him to publish his "Annotations on St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians." This letter also shows with what caution and earnestness Melanchthon was understood to insist upon "the sufficiency of the scriptures." Indeed, there is no doubt, there can be no doubt, that all the Reformers of the first age adopted this principle; it is universally known and admitted that they did adopt it.

The second principle of the Reformation is that *all men have a right to read and understand for themselves these scriptures.* Immediately connected with this, or rather another aspect of the same principle, is *the denial of all right to compel opinion in matters of religion.* Calvin is full and explicit on this point. "Now," says he, "since the consciences of the faithful, being privileged with the liberty which we have described, have been delivered, by the favour of Christ, from all necessary obligation to the observance of those things in which the Lord hath been pleased they should be left free, we conclude, that they are exempt from all human authority." Again he says, "Paul hesitates not to assert, that his death (that is Christ's) is indeed vain, if we suffer our souls to be in subjection to men (Gal. v. 1, 4.) For his sole object in some chapters of his Epistle to the Galatians is to prove that Christ is obscured, or abolished, with respect to us, unless our consciences continue in their liberty; from which they are certainly fallen if they can be ensnared in the bonds of laws and ordinances at the pleasure of men." Luther says, "we have not received any authority or power to compel belief." After describing the manner in which crimes and disturbances are checked and controlled by the civil authority, he goes on to say, "the kingdom of Christ is of an entirely different nature. If you are willing to believe, yours will be the benefit—If you refuse to believe, the choice is free to you, and yours alone is the responsibility." He thus expresses the general principle of the Reformers on this point. "We do not unsheathe the sword, neither do we resort to force—words and arguments are the only

weapons of our warfare." In his Annotations upon Romans, Melanchthon enters upon a severe argument on the subject of *ecclesiastical power*, in which he fully develops the principle of the right of private judgment, and of the impropriety and invalidity of all human laws or ordinances in religious concerns.

There is another principle, without the admission of which, the Reformation could not have begun—cannot go on, can never be completely defended. In its progress, this principle has been more and more developed, and its most beneficial effects will never be produced, until it is acknowledged and acted upon by men universally. It is the principle of *toleration—a relinquishment of all attempts to produce entire uniformity in religious belief*, and *a disposition to feel charity, and show respect to those who differ from us.* Because the first Reformers did not, as it must be confessed, act uniformly and steadily upon this principle, there is a general opinion that they did not receive it, or appreciate its importance and obligation. This opinion, however, cannot be maintained. They were aware of all the great principles which were involved in the cause, which they had undertaken, and were bearing through to its triumph; and if they did offend against this, or any other of them, they have not the excuse of ignorance. Luther makes use of the precept, in the parable of the tares, let them grow together to the harvest, as the basis of an entire sermon, in which toleration is enforced, and the duty of not using violence or compulsion to eradicate error enjoined. He had evidently made up his mind, that uniformity of opinion was a state of things not to be expected in this world. In one of his sermons, after mentioning the different expedients which had been resorted to in the attempt to bring it about, he declares his belief that differences in the mode of receiving and interpreting it are essential to Christianity—and that if they were wholly removed, and men were all made to think alike, religion would be lost in the process. He challenges all who think uniformity practicable, to come forward and effect it if they can. He confidently dares them to attempt the task, and promises to take back all that he has said, if they can accomplish it. Me-

lanchthon infers the principle of toleration from the 29th and 30th, and 31st verses of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. "Let the prophets speak, two or three, and let the others judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted." And he enforces it to a higher degree than we have yet practically reached. "Let all," says he, "have full liberty to teach and maintain whatever opinions they may choose to teach and maintain—let them all be listened to—and let them be judged by all."

COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

Continued from page, 234.

THE COMMUNION.

"Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us."

Does not this prayer evidently imply, that the minister and the people believe in transubstantiation? For what words can be more express on the subject?

"If the consecrated bread and wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Priest is to consecrate more according to the form prescribed."

I do not like consecration. People will naturally be led to imagine, that the bread and wine over which the Priest utters a few words, must be superior to other bread and wine, and that some mystical properties have been communicated to them. The ceremony is more like legerdemain, than a grave religious service. Some people may be so superstitious as to suppose, that the Priest has power to communicate a divine property to the above articles; but every rational christian, will treat with contempt such an absurd notion; and will naturally exclaim, can a man, with all the infirmities and imperfections of other human beings, possess the power of bestowing miraculous or divine properties upon a little dough and juice of the grape! No; ridiculous. Such priestcraft might very

well suit the dark ages; but will never be succumbed to by the people of these enlightened times.

"The sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances; and therefore, may not be adored (for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians;) and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ, are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body, to be at one time in more places than one."

Are not these words in express contradiction to the passages before cited from the Communion Service? Verily, the Church of England is full of inconsistencies.

And then, we have the idea of a Deity partly composed of a "natural body and blood;" and to this is annexed the admission, that the God-man of the Trinity is Omnipresent only in one of his natures.

Thus absurdity meets us at every step.

PURGATOR.

THE CREED OF THE ORTHODOX ILLUSTRATED BY THEIR OWN WRITERS.

When the orthodox of the present day are reminded of the inconsistency of their opinions, and also of the tendency of them to shock the feelings of mankind, and to lead to consequences fatal to piety and morality, nothing is more common than for them to exclaim that it is a gross misrepresentation. They deny that they are chargeable with the belief that God came down from heaven and died upon a cross—that he was a child born, &c. The following quotations will settle this point with the thinking part of the community—the following are from Dr. Watts:—

This infant is the mighty God,
Come to be suckled and adored.

Aaron must lay his robes aside,
His mitre and his vest;
When God himself comes down to be,
The offering and the priest.

Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in,

When God, the mighty Maker, died
For man the creature's sin.

Was ever rebel courted so
In groans of an expiring God.

The following passages are selected from Hymns for the Lord's Supper, by John Wesley and Charles Wesley, the 5th Edition, 1785.—

O thou eternal victim slain
A sacrifice for guilty man,
An offering in the sinner's stead.

And view thee bleeding on the tree
My God, who died for me, for me.

Jesus suffering Deity.

The death of God, the death of sin,

Salvation to God,
Who carried our load,
And purchased our souls with the price of his blood.

Now discern the Deity,
Now his heavenly birth declare!
Faith cries out, 'tis he, 'tis he,
My God that suffers there!

Lo, the powers of heaven he shakes;
Nature in convulsions lies,
Earth's profoundest centre quakes,
The great *Jehovah* dies!

The poet represents the Great Creator of the Universe by the disgusting Monster God of the Heathens, known by the name PAN, who was represented with horns, a red face, and his lower parts shaped like a goat covered with hair, and with cloven feet like that animal,—I shall give the passage entire, see p. 17.—

Dies the glorious cause of all,
The true eternal *Pan*,
Falls to raise us from our fall,
To ransom sinful man:
Well may *Sol* withdraw his light,
With the sufferer sympathise,

Leave the world in sudden night,
While his Creator dies.

This passage needs no comment. A question will arise in he minds of some; viz. Did the Heathens in their worst and darkest days degrade the great Creator of the world more? They represented him by base and contemptible animals—Mr. Wesley speaks of him under the name of a monster, calls him "the true eternal Pan." In vain shall we expect the conversion of the Heathen abroad or Infidels at home, so long as such abominations as these go by the name of Christianity.

The following passages are from Hymns by the late Bishop Heber, (of Calcutta) just published.

Lo, Nature's face of beaming light
She veils in darkness at the sight
Of Him, her God, the Crucified!

Our God the ransom-Lamb hath been,
Our God hath saved us from our sin!

When God went back to heaven—the living God—
Rode he the heavens upon a fiery car?
Waved seraph-wings along his glorious road?
Stood still to wonder each bright wandering star?
Upon the cross He hung, and bowed the head,
And prayed for them that smote, and them that cursed;
And, drop by drop, His slow life-blood was shed,
And His last hour of suffering was the worst.

There are images in these lines which are too horrible to contemplate. The Poet, in the commencement, describes the descent of the "living God" in splendour and glory, and then inquires, if he returned in the same state?—No; he hung upon the cross—his life-blood departed from him "drop by drop." The "last hour" of God's "suffering," is an expression which would surprise us, even from the mouth of a heathen—what are we to think of it from the pen of a Christian?

After these specimens, and many more might be quoted, let not the champions of Orthodoxy say they are misrepresented,

when they are told that they maintain the doctrine of the DEATH of the *Creator of the Universe.* Take away this doctrine from their system and what then would remain which themselves would deem important?—

B.

A WORD IN SEASON.

THE celebrated Presbytery of Exeter, in the year 1719, evinced a spirit of interference with the faith of others. Suspecting that several of its members were infected with heresy, called upon them to purge themselves by making a confession of their faith in some well-known and approved phrases of orthodoxy. When it came to the turn of a Mr. Parr to make his confession, his answer was to this effect. "The words of Paul alone I shall use on the present occasion—"There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all," and I wish I could add—but the virulence of your temper prevents me from adding—"and in you all."

This spirit, which has been slumbering in England for some time among the Presbyterian body, who have been satisfied with enjoying themselves, not caring much about faith, has lately been raised from his sleep, and made his appearance, armed *cap à pie,* in the celebrated Inquisition at Ulster, whose late proceedings, while they excite the astonishment of the liberal, are deserving the execration of the whole christian world. The event, will, however, be the destruction of their system—may this soon take place.

AMEN.

REMARKS ON THE ASHTON SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEES' ADDRESS FOR THE YEAR 1827.

The Ashton Sunday School Committee have lately published their Address to the scholars under their care, or rather to the parents of the scholars, in which they expatiate largely upon

honesty. It is not my intention to offer a single word in depreciation of this most invaluable virtue—too much can hardly be said in its praise. Nevertheless, the Address seems to call for some remarks, and, as a member of society, I claim a right to animadvert on a public document which, in some respects, appears to me to be neither just nor generous towards a very important class of the social community—the labouring class. I readily admit, that if working people, generally, obtained what was sufficient for their wants and comforts, the advice which the Address gives, and the maxims which it inculcates, with a few exceptions, would be very excellent; but as the reverse, to a considerable degree, is lamentably the case, it is unfeeling, not to say, wanton, to approach them in such a strain and language.

To talk to them of "*independence*."—They are bowed down, by poverty and oppression, in a state of slavery; and how taunting, to say to the captive—Thou art free; to the slave—Thou hast liberty; when the one is immured in a dungeon, and the other is chained to the earth!

It is also equally unfeeling to talk to them of "*providing for the future*." Their means do not furnish them with sufficient for their present wants; and how is futurity to be provided for out of deficiency? Here are three shillings, to purchase necessaries of life which will cost six; and yet a certain portion of this is to be laid up for future contingencies! Pharaoh commanded the Israelites to make bricks, but would not furnish them with straw, which was a necessary material. The opulent of the present day say to the poor, *provide for the future*; but they take special care that they shall have no opportunity to do so.

As to "*running into debt*," much as it is to be dreaded, it is exceedingly difficult for the poor to avoid it. Give them what is right between man and man—what is necessary for their wants and comforts; and then tell them not to live upon trust, but to pay for what they get. Honesty, it is true, is a virtue whose obligations are sacred, and which every good man will endeavour to keep inviolate; but deprivation and poverty present strong temptations to transgression; and though deviations from rectitude can in no case be justifiable, yet allowances will be made by every generous mind for the pressure of indigence and distress. Hence the wisdom of Agar's prayer,—"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny thee; and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." And hence those who oppress their fellow-creatures down to poverty, are enemies of goodness, and a reproach to their maker.

Honesty, however, much as it is to be admired, and important as it is in its results, will not, in every case, "*make a man independent*." Many a man there is, of the most incorruptible in-

tegrity, who has never been able to emerge from a dependent state; who has "risen up early, and sat up late, and ate the bread of carefulness," but whose labours and toils and anxieties have been all in vain. And hence the reflection, that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

It is not true, that "*honesty is the only way to success.*" For many a villian prospers, where an honest man fails; and places of trust and emolument shall be filled with the worst of mankind, while those who are the most meritorious shall droop in obscurity and neglect. Nay, villains are frequently chosen for their very villainy; they are fit tools for the oppressor; their hearts are steeled for the accomplishment of his iniquitous purposes; and honors and distinctions are conferred upon them, as a reward for their evil deeds. Thus, it may frequently be said, that "the world is given to the wicked." And hence the pathetic complaint of the Psalmist, in the 73rd Psalm,—"I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, &c."—Honesty is the best way to render success valuable, or to blunt the sting of disappointment; but that it is the *only* way to success, thousands of titled villains prove the reverse.

It is not *generally* correct, that the poor "*have only to determine, whether they will depend upon themselves, or whether they will be thrown upon the public.*" For the oppression of those who make haste to be rich, often leave them no alternative but the latter. Indeed, so much is this sometimes the case, that it may be said, that many a master applies for parish relief, to eke out the small pittance of his servants' wages. So that, in fact, in these cases, the masters themselves are the real paupers, while their servants bear the stigma, and suffer the inconvenience.

The Ashton Sunday School Committee, however, are right in one particular; for truth will out either by one means or another; and no wonder that it should pop out unawares. when dilating so charmingly upon honesty. They say, "*if you will live upon the public, do not forget, that they will feed you ill.*" Aye *ill* indeed!—a poor paltry pittance, that will scarcely keep body and soul together. And this, perhaps, doled out by an individual of a stern morose character; and who may more properly be designated, an oppressor of the poor, than a friend of the unfortuuate.

But, perhaps, with respect to "*feeding ill, &c.*" an exception might be made in behalf of Churchwardens, Overseers and Clergymen. For it so happens, that when they feed at the public expence, they generally take care, that it shall not be *ill.* They are paupers of rather a portly kind. They do not shame their pasture, and they are determined that they will not. It is rather

hard, however, that those should be fed so well, who need no feeding; while those should be fed so *ill*, who need feeding the most. But things do go strangely cross, at times, in this world below. Well; there is another and a better; and "there the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

It is good, that the "man who has acquired any thing unjustly, ought to make full restitution to the person he has wronged." But if this equitable principle were to be put into practice, what an immense refunding would there be by those, who have acquired vast fortunes, by pressing millions of their fellow creatures down to poverty and want! This is too good to be expected here. It is a restitution that can be looked for only at the bar of the righteous judge.

In conclusion, it is but just that I should say, that the Ashton Sunday School Committee, in many respects, deserve praise. They are zealous to diffuse the light of knowledge, and persevering in the noble object in which they are engaged. And though, in their late Address, they have manifested little sympathy with the poor, yet, we may hope, that, in their future Addresses, the deficiency will be amply supplied; and that, while they remind the poor of their relative social duties, they will also remind the rich of their's; and teach them that they should be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate;" that they are stewards of God's bounty, and should faithfully improve it; that they ought to practise self-denial, that they may do the greatest good; that they should remember, that God is the father of all, and that they should feel and behave towards mankind as brethren; and that those who are masters among them, should "give unto their servants that which is just and equal, knowing that they also have a master in heaven," who will render to them hereafter according to their deeds.

JUSTITIA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are under the unavoidable necessity of publishing the present Number, with a half sheet short of our usual quantity. We shall give an additional half sheet in our next.

We shall be obliged to our Correspondents to favor us with their Communications as early in the month as possible, to enable us to prepare the Table of Contents, Index, &c. &c.

We should have been glad to have gratified our friend CRITO, *by inserting the proceedings of the Synod, alias Inquisition, of Ulster, but they are too voluminous, and we are induced to think they are as full of iniquity, as the report is of syllables.*

Printed by F. B. Wright, Swift's Court, Castle Street.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 36. NEW SERIES *Price* 4½*d.* DECEMBER 1, 1827.

ILLUSTRATION OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

1 Cor. xv. 32.

If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus.

THAT Paul here refers to what befel him at Ephesus, (see Acts xix) may appear from 2 Cor. i. 9, where he mentions his great persecution in Asia, of which Ephesus was the Metropolis, *that*, saith he, *I despaired even of life*, having the sentence of death passed on him, so far as he could guess of himself, and so making his deliverance a wonderful and unexpected act of God's, a kind of raising him from the dead. And also by his mentioning fighting with beasts, which was a punishment that malefactors were condemned to in those days. And of that particularly in Asia we have an instance in these first times in the Epistle of the church of Smyrna there, about the martyrdom of Polycarp. In their festivities, or solemnities kept in honour of their Gods, they had these fightings with beasts on the theatre, annexed to them, as a chief or principal ceremony. And it was common for malefactors to be punished at these festivals, as among the Jews at their passover, not only to make their punishments more exemplary, but as a sacrifice to their Gods.

Now that Paul was condemned, at least designed by the multitude, to this punishment at that time may thus appear by the express words, 2 Cor. i. 9. We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that is, passed on us. As if the Apostle had said, men so designed me, but God took me out of their hands, snatched me from the danger.

In Acts xix. we read, the city being in an uproar, they all with one consent ran to the Theatre, the place where these bloody tragedies were acted, and haled Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's companions thither. And if Paul had made his appearance, they would have treated him in the same manner, but the Christians there prevented him. The officer who had the conduct of these festivities, having

some kindness for Paul, warned him of his danger, that he might not expose himself to the fury of the populace, knowing that the full purpose of the people was to force him into the theatre, that he might be made to combat with the wild beasts. This appears also by the words of the Town Clerk, v. 37. Ye have brought these men, being neither robbers of your Temple, nor blasphemers of your Goddess; that is, ye have dealt with them, as if they were some notorious malefactors, to be thus publicly punished in the theatre, whereas they have done nothing worthy of such proceedings. This appears to be a clear interpretation of the words, *if after the manner of men*, which signifies *as far as man's purpose concerning us*, who had condemned us to this death, though God delivered us. The Apostle did not actually fight with beasts, but was in the most imminent danger of being compelled to it by the fury of the people.

See Dr. Hammond's excellent note on the passage.

The following account of this barbarous custom, is extracted from Burder's Oriental Literature, Vol. ii. 476—478.

The barbarous custom of making men combat with wild beasts has prevailed in the East down to the most modern times. JURGEN ANDERSEN, who visited the states of the Great Mogul in 1646, gives an account in his *Travels*, (chap. xxii. p. 29.) of such a combat with animals, which he witnessed at Agra, the residence of the Great Mogul. His description affords a lively image of those bloody spectacles in which ancient Rome took so much pleasure, and to which the above words of the apostle refer. Alamardan-Chan, the governor of Cashmire, who sat among the Chans, stood up, and exclaimed, "It is the will and desire of the Great Mogul, Schah Choram, that if there are any valiant heroes who will shew their bravery by combating with wild beasts, armed with shield and sword, let them come forward: if they conquer, the Mogul will load them with great favour, and clothe their countenance with gladness." Upon this three persons advanced, and offered to undertake the combat. Alamardan-Chan again cried aloud. "None should have any other weapon than a shield and a sword, and whosoever has a breast-plate under his clothes, should lay it aside and fight honourably." Hereupon a powerful lion was let into the garden, and one of the three men above-mentioned advanced against him; the lion, on seeing his enemy, ran violently up to him: the man however defended himself bravely, and kept off the

lion for a good while, till his arms grew tired; the lion then seized the shield with one paw, and with the other, his antagonist's right arm, so that he was not able to use his weapon; the latter, seeing his life in danger, took with his left hand his Indian dagger, which he had sticking in his girdle, and thrust it as far as possible into the lion's mouth; the lion then let him go; the man however was not idle, but cut the lion almost through with one stroke, and after that entirely to pieces. Upon this victory, the common people began to shout, and call out, "Thank God! he has conquered." But the Mogul said, smiling, to this conqueror, "Thou art a brave warrior, and hast fought admirably! But did I not command thee to fight honourably only with shield and sword? But, like a thief, thou hast stolen the life of the lion with thy dagger," And immediately he ordered two men to rip up his belly, and to place him upon an elephant, and, as an example to others, to lead him about, which was done on the spot. Soon after a tiger was let loose; against which a tall, powerful man advanced with an air of defiance, as if he would cut the tiger up. The tiger however, was far too sagacious and active, for, in the first attack, he seized the combatant by the neck, tore his throat, and then his whole body in pieces. This enraged another good fellow, but little, and of mean appearance, from whom one would not have expected it; he rushed forward like one mad, and the tiger on his part undauntedly flew at his enemy; but the man at the first attack cut off his two fore paws, so that he fell, and the man cut his body to pieces. Upon this the king cried, "What is your name?" He answered, "My name is Geyby." Soon after one of the king's servants came and brought him a piece of gold brocade, and said, "Geyby, receive the robe of honour with which the Mogul presents you." He took the garment with great reverence, kissed it three times, pressing it each time to his eyes and breast, then held it up, and in silence put up a prayer for the health of the Mogul; and when he had concluded it, he cried, "May God let him become as great as Tamerlane, from whom he is descended. May he live seven hundred years, and his house continue to eternity!" Upon this he was summoned by a chamberlain to go from the garden up to the king, and when he came to the entrance, he was received by two Chans, who conducted him between them to kiss the Mogul's feet. And when he was going to retire, the king said to him, "Praised be thou, Geyby-Chan for thy valiant deeds, and this name shalt thou keep to eternity. I am your gracious master, and thou art my slave." ROSENMULLER.

FAITH AND WORKS.

A TALE.

(From the BEREAN, published at Wilmington, U. S., N. America.)

GOOD Dan and Jane were man and wife,
And lived a loving kind of life;
One point, however, they disputed,
And each by turns his mate confuted.
'Twas faith and works—this knotty question
They found not easy of digestion.
While Dan for faith alone contended,
Jane equally good works defended.
"They are not Christians, sure, but Turks,
Who build on faith and scoff at works,"
Quoth Jane. While eager Dan replied,
"By none but heathen faith's denied."
"I'll tell you wife," at length quoth Dan,
A story of a right good man.
A patriarch sage, of ancient days,
A man of faith, whom all must praise,
In his own country he possess'd
Whate'er can make a wise man bless'd;
His was the flock, the field, the spring,
In short a little rural king.
Yet, pleas'd he quits his native land
By faith in the Divine command:
God bade him go, and he, content,
Went forth, not knowing where he went,
He trusted in the promise made.
And, undisputing, straight obey'd.
The heavenly word he did not doubt,
But prov'd his faith by going out."
Jane answer'd with some little pride—
"I've an example on my side:
And tho' my tale be somewhat longer,
I trust you'll find it vastly stronger;
I'll tell you, Daniel, of a man,
The holiest since the world began,
Who now God's favour is receiving,
For prompt obeying, not believing.
One only son this man possess'd,
In whom his righteous age was bless'd:
And more, to mark the grace of Heaven,
This son by miracle was given;
And from this child the Word Divine

Had promis'd an illustrious line.
When lo! at once a voice he hears,
Which sounds like thunder in his ears;
God says—Go sacrifice thy son!
—This moment, Lord, it shall be done.
He goes and instantly prepares
To slay the child of many prayers.
Now here you see the grand expedience
Of works; of actual, sound obedience.
This was not faith, but act and deed.
The Lord commands—the child shall bleed.
Thus Abraham acted," Jenny cried;
"Thus Abraham trusted," Dan replied.
"Abraham?" quoth Jane, "why that's my man."
"No, Abraham's him I mean," says Dan,
"He stands a monument of faith;"—
"No, 'tis for works, the Scripture saith."
"'Tis for his faith that I defend him:"
"'Tis for obedience I commend him."
Thus he—thus she—both warmly feel,
And lose their temper in their zeal:
Too quick each other's choice to blame,
They did not see each meant the same.
"At length, good wife," quoth honest Dan,
"We're talking of the self-same man."
The works you praise I own indeed,
Grow from that faith for which I plead.
'Tis not enough of faith to talk,
A man of God with God must walk:
Our doctrines are at last the same,
They only differ in the name.
The faith I fight for is the root,
The works you value are the fruit.
How shall you know my creed sincere,
Unless in works my faith appear?
How shall I know a tree's alive,
Unless I see it bear and thrive?
Your works not growing on my root,
Would prove they were not genuine fruit,
And Abraham, whom for faith I quote,
For faith deserves especial note:
If faith produce no works, I see
That faith is not a living tree.
Thus faith and works together grow,
No separate life they e'er can know.
They're soul and body, hand and heart—
What God hath joined let no one part.

B.

FABLE OF A GUEBRE PROPHET.

CARRIED by an angel, says the fable, to the spot whence he beheld the place of torment of the wicked, and informed by the angel of the various reasons for the various conditions in which he saw the several sufferers, his attention was at lenght particularly caught by the situation of a man whose naked body was surrounded by raging flames, with the single exception of his left foot! 'And what,' said the prophet to the angel; 'what, my lord, is the cause of that particular exception!'—'The man thou beholdest,' returned the angel, 'was in his lifetime, a wicked king. His oppression of his subjects was grievous, and thou seest how he suffereth for his guilt! But one day, that miserable tyrant, (tyrant though he was) walked near to a sheep cote, where it chanced that he saw a lamb tethered to a stake, and was hungering after the remainder of some hay which had been placed near it, but of which it had already consumed all that was within its reach. The wicked prince, feeling upon that occasion one emotion of pity, stretched out his left foot, and pushed the hay within the reach of the lamb! Thou perceivest then, O prophet! how surely thy God remembereth every deed of mercy among all the sons of men; how he loveth all his creatures; and how he beareth in mind every act of love which is performed for them! A single act of mercy, bestowed upon a hungry lamb, has saved from the flames of hell the left foot even of a wicked tyrant!"—

Ibid.

HOWARD'S MONUMENT.

AT the distance of five versts to the north of *Kherson*, stands the original monument of the Prince of Christian Philanthropists—the great, the illustrious Howard; who, after travelling 50,000 British miles, to investigate and relieve the sufferings of humanity, fell a victim near this place, to his unremitting exertions in this benevolent cause. It is situated a little to the east of the public road leading from Nikolaief to Kherson, near the south-

ern bank of a small stream which here diffuses a partial verdure across the steppe. On the opposite bank are a few straggling and ruinous huts, and close by, is a large garden, sheltered by fine lofty trees, which have been planted to beautify the villa once connected with it, but now no more. The spot itself is sandy, with a scanty sprinkling of vegetation, and is only distinguishable from the rest of the steppe by two brick pyramids, and a few graves, in which the neighbouring peasants have interred their dead—attracted, no doubt, by the report of the singular worth of the foreign friend whose ashes are here deposited till the resurrection of the just.

This Cenotaph is built of a compact white freestone, found at some distance, and is about thirty feet in height, surrounded by a wall of the same stone, seven feet high by two hundred in circumference. Within this wall, in which is a beautiful cast iron gate, a fine row of Lombardy poplars has been planted, which when fully grown, will greatly adorn the monument. On the pedestal is a Russian inscription of the following import:

HOWARD

Died January 20, 1790, *Aged* 65:

the simplicity of which is in strict accordance with orders the great Philanthropist more than once gave, and which with the rectification of the dates, (*) only requires the all-emphatic addition, *Christ is my hope*, to render it perfectly conformable to the inscription dictated by his own pen, and placed under that to the memory of his wife in Cardington Church near Bedford. Agreeably to his own request, a sun dial is represented near the summit of the pillar, but with this remarkable circumstance, that the only divisions of time it exhibits, are the hours from *ten* to *two*, as if to intimate that a considerable portion of the morning of life is past ere we enter on the discharge of its active duties; and that, with many, the performance of them is over at an early hour after the meridian of our days.

Henderson's Travels in Russia.

(*) The inscription at Cardington, according to Mr. Brown is, January 21, 1790, Aged 64.

BIBLE SOCIETY IN RUSSIA.

The following extract will show the state of biblical knowledge in Russia, and the desire which exists among the clergy of that country for the possession of the Scriptures in their own language.

HAVING driven a little beyond the gate, the Bishop (Eugenius) returned in his coach and six, and did us the honor to call, in order to convey us to his residence in the monastery, which is situated close to the cathedral. We, of course, politely declined, and afterwards visited him. On entering his parlour, we found the whole committee of the Bielgorod Bible Association assembled to meet us, with which we engaged almost immediately in a most lively and interesting conversation on the subject of the Bible Society. Having presented the Bishop with a copy of the Gospels, the Acts, and ten of the Apostolical Epistles in modern Russ, along with the Sclavonic text; his joy was so great, that he could not refrain from instantly imploring a blessing on it; and solemnly declared, that could he only clasp in his arms the whole of the sacred scriptures, in his native language, as Simeon of old did the blessed subject of their testimony, like him, he would say, "Lord! now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." For upwards of thirty years, he assured us, it had been his anxious prayer, that such a translation might be effected, as there exists so many passages in the ancient Sclavonic Version, that are perfectly unintelligible. In the seminary at this place for the instruction of the sons of the clergy, are upwards of *seven hundred* students, and the total number attending to the spiritual schools in the diocese amounts to nearly *two thousand*. In all these schools, the Bishop has recently ordered three chapters of the Bible to be read every day; one chapter of the historical books of the Old Testament; one of the Proverbs of Solomon; and one of the New Testament. So great was the destitution of sacred oracles, in this part of the Empire, that when an inquiry was recently instituted,

to ascertain what number of copies would be wanted for the churches and clergy of the diocese; it was found, that out of *eight hundred and eighty* churches, about *seven hundred* required to be supplied.

Henderson's Biblical Researches.

EXTRACTED FROM JOHN WESLEY'S JOURNAL.

SUNDAY, MAY 18, 1788.—I subjoined a short account of Methodism; particularly insisting on the following circumstances: There is no other religious society under heaven, which requires nothing of men in order to their admission into it, but a desire to save their souls. Look all around you, you cannot be admitted into the church or society of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opinions with them, and adhere to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think. Neither do they impose any particular mode of worship, but you may continue to worship in your former manner, be it what it may. Now I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is now allowed, or has been allowed since the age of the Apostles! Here is our glorying. And a glorying peculiar to us! What society shares it with us?

JOHN WESLEY'S PLAIN ACCOUNT OF METHODISM.

"ALL that is contributed or collected," says Mr. Wesley, "is both received and expended by others; nor have I so much as the beholding thereof, with my eyes. And so it will be, till I turn Turk or Pagan. For I look upon all this revenue, be it what it may, as sacred to God and the poor, out of which, if I want any thing, I am relieved, even as another poor man; so were originally all Ecclesiastical revenues, as every man of learning knows:

and the bishops and priests used them only as such. If any use them otherwise now, God help them!"

Now reader you can perceive by these extracts alone, that Methodism is no more the same in this day, what it was in the days of Wesley, than a penknife is the same which has had half a dozen new handles and the same number of blades.

Well may it be said that the Methodists began in the spirit in England, and have ended in the flesh in America.

American Telescope.

ON THE INSPIRATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

AN opinion, I think generally prevails, among professing Christians, that Jesus Christ was every moment of his life, especially after he entered on his public ministry, under the special guidance, influence, and power of the spirit of God. That his knowledge of future events, and of the dispositions of men's hearts, were things with which he was at all times particularly and minutely acquainted. That he had at all times the power to work miracles. And that his never employing this power to relieve his own wants, or to ward off any trouble or affliction to which he was liable, shows his self-denial. These things are generally taken for granted, but will they be found on investigation to be correct? Is there any thing in our Lord's conduct, in his expressions, or in any thing that is said of him in the New Testament, that will warrant such a conclusion.

The late excellent George Walker has the following passages, which seem to bear on this subject. In his sermon on the character of Judas, speaking of the reason why our Lord should have chosen a man, with whose character he is supposed to be fully acquainted, he says:

"Is it so very clear that our Saviour was acquainted with the future character of Judas at the time that he elected or admitted

him into the number of his constant followers and disciples; or that at any period he was acquainted with the individual person of the traitor before he actually pointed him out? This does not appear from any testimony of our Saviour concerning him."

"The universal prescience of our Lord is a doctrine which many have taken up, and confidently talk of; but upon what authority I profess myself to be utterly ignorant, unless it be in consequence of the still larger supposition, that he is indeed the very God himself. Our Saviour does, indeed, on some occasions, appear to be possessed of the more than human faculty of knowing the secret thoughts of men, and of being acquainted with many important events in futurity; but he speaks also of his knowledge being communicated to him from the Most High; and we have his own testimony, that there were some things relative to his own kingdom, which the Father had not revealed to him."

No doubt can be entertained that communications both of wisdom and power were made to Jesus by his heavenly Father, and that, when under the influence of the same, he was able to work miracles, and to reveal the mind and will of God to man. When under this divine influence, he was doubtless incapable of mistake or error.

That the miraculous power did not always rest upon him, may very justly be inferred from his frequently praying to his father before he performed a miracle, as at the grave of Lazarus, on which occasion, he thanks his God because he had heard him; and he adds, I know that thou hearest me always, but he said this that the people might believe that God had sent him.

Again on another occasion he says, "think ye not that I could pray to my Father, and he would give me twelve legions of angels." This shows, that he had not the power to command their attendance. His declaration, that of himself he knew nothing, and could do nothing, it was only, therefore, when the Father communicated these things to him, that he knew, and that he was capable of acting, &c. At all other times he was on a level

with his brethren of mankind, he talked and acted as other men, and was "in all respects like unto them."

I have thrown out these hints, principally with the design of drawing the attention of some of your correspondents to the subject, and am with much respect yours,

ALPHA.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE study of Natural History is at once pleasing and instructive. The wisest men in all ages have paid attention to this subject. King Solomon is said to have written largely on Natural History, and it would appear from the admonitions he gives, that he had learnt some important lessons from the study. His advice to the slothful may serve as a text to the following curious account of the Ant, which is extracted from a work entitled "Nature Displayed."

Proverbs vi. 6. *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise.*

THE sight of ants is really very instructive. They are a little people united, like the bees, in a republic governed by its own laws and politics. They have a kind of oblong city, divided into various streets, that terminate at various magazines. Some of the ants consolidate the earth, and prevent its falling in, by a surface of glew with which they incrust it. Those whom we commonly see, amass several splinters of wood, which they draw over the tops of their streets, and use them as rafters to sustain the roof; across these they lay another rank of splinters, and cover them with a heap of dry rushes, grass, and straw, which they raise with a double slope, to turn the current of water from their magazines; some of which are appropriated to receive their provisions, and, in the others, they deposit their eggs, and the worms that proceed from them.

As to their provisions, they take up with every thing eatable,

and are indefatigable in bringing home their supplies. You may see one loaded with the kernel of some fruit, another bends under the weight of a dead gnat. Sometimes several of them are at work at the carcass of a may fly, or some other insect. What cannot be removed, they eat upon the spot, and carry home all that is capable of being preserved. The whole society is not permitted to make excursions at random. Some are detached as scouts, to get intelligence, and according to the tidings they bring, all the community are upon the march, either to attach a ripe pear, a cake of sugar, or a jar of sweetmeats; and in order to come to this jar, they leave the garden, and ascend the house; there they find this mine of sugar, the rich *Peru* of sweets, that opens all its treasures to their view; but their march to it, as well as their return from it, is under some regulations. The whole band is ordered to assemble, and move in the same track, but the injunction is not executed with much severity, and they have liberty to expatiate, when they have an opportunity to spring any game in the country. The green vermin, that make an infinite waste among the flowers, and cockle the leaves of the peach and pear trees, are surrounded with a glew, or kind of honey, which is sought for by the ants with great avidity; but they are not solicitous either for the flesh of these creatures, or for any part of the plant. These are the vermin who are the authors of all that destruction to our trees, which is falsely imputed to the ants, and draws upon them a very unjust and cruel persecution.

The next prevailing passion is, to amass a store of corn, or other grain that will keep; and lest the humidity of the cells should make the corn shoot up, we are told, for a certainty, that they gnaw off the buds which grow at the point of the grain.

The ants, after they have passed the summer in a constant employment and fatigue, shut themselves up in the winter, and enjoy the fruits of their labours in peace; however it is very probable, they eat but little in that season, and are either benumbed or buried in sleep, like a multitude of other insects. And therefore their industry in storing up provisions, is not so

much intended to guard against the winter, as to provide, during the harvest, a supply for their young. They nourish them as soon as the leave the egg, with an assiduity that employs the whole nation; and the care of their little progeny, is esteemed a matter of importance to all the state.

When the young quit the egg, they are little worms, no longer than common grains of sand, and after they have, for some time, received their aliment, which is brought to them in common, and distributed in equal proportions, they spin a thread, and wrap themselves up in a white web, and sometimes in one that is yellow; at which period they cease to eat, and become *aurelias*. In this state, some people fancy they are the eggs of ants, when, in reality, they are the nymphs, out of whose ruins the new pismires are to rise. Though the young discontinue their eating, their nurture still proves very fatiguing to their parents. These have generally several apartments, and remove their young, from the nursery, to some other mansion which they intend to people. They either raise the *aurelias* toward the surface of the earth, or sink them to a distance from it, in proportion as the season is either warm or cold, rainy or dry. They raise them, when the weather proves serene, or when a long drought is succeeded by gentle dews; but, at the approach of night and cold, or the appearance of showers, they clasp their beloved charge in their arms, and descend with them to such a depth, that one must then dig above a foot into the earth, before those *aurelias* can be discovered.

PRIESTS AFRAID OF RIDICULE.

Religion, as the priests have disfigured it, is only a wicked and ambitious scheme, contrived by them, to set themselves above the people. This is so true, that wherever the priests have the most power, religion has the least. Being neither appointed by the law of nature, nor the law of Christ, they are only intruders into the affairs of religion; which is therefore under an usurpation, while it is under them. So that their foundation

being false, they are in most countries reduced to support it by feigned facts, and deceitful appearances. And as they are thus obliged to cover fraud with fraud, and support one violence by another, it is no wonder that we find it often so carefully hidden under inventions, and deformed by absurdities; and all those inventions and absurdities defended by cruelty and a strong hand.

Moliere having, in his plays, brought upon the stage characters from the highest quality and professions in *France*, without offending either; drew, in his *Tartuffe*, an excellent and strong picture of a hypocrite, who, though carefully distinguished from a man sincerely religious, yet happened to resemble the Churchmen so much, that they raised a terrible outcry against the play; and according to their laudable custom, drew heaven, head and shoulders, into their quarrel. *Tartuffe* was, it seems, their representive general, and in ridiculing his godly grimaces and stoical devotion, *Moliere*, they said, ridiculed them. In fine, by exposing the concealed villain and debauchee, the whole posse of the priests thought themselves exposed.

Zealous therefore for the dignity of the cassock, and justly apprehending that a contempt upon hypocrisy, would bring a contempt upon their order, they applied to the court; I say to the court, where, by a religious subserviency to the ambition, lust, and all the rogueries of the great, this sort of creature always finds friendship and countenance. That arbitrary and debauched court could refuse the priests nothing; and the play was forbid. Thus the *Tartuffes* of the Church, redeemed from scorn the *Tartuffe* of the stage: the picture was secured from being shewn by the number, clamour, and interest of the originals.

Not content to rail with all due clerical bitterneess against this comedy, and curse the ingenious author by word of mouth; they detached one from their body to curse him in print. This christian author, without ever having seen the play, pronounced it diabolical: he affirmed, that *Moliere* had a Devil, that he was a Devil incarnate, a Devil in man's shape, a libertine, an atheist, and one who ought to be burned in this world, as he would assuredly be damned in the next. For the vengeance of these mes-

sengers of peace never stops at the death of their victim; nor will they allow their maker to have more mercy than themselves.

To shew how justly these holy persons were alarmed on this occasion, I shall here give a sketch of *Tartuffe's* character, as drawn in that play. He is a fellow, who from his godly outside, and great poverty, is taken by an honest gentleman, credulous and devout, into his family, and permitted to govern it. He is a great glutton, and a great pretender to fasting; a great dispiser of money, but rooks all he can from his deluded patron. He will not speak to my lady's maid till he has covered her breasts with his handkerchief, so afraid is the saint of temptation; but at the same time he tempts my lady herself to adultery, and endeavours to debauch his benefactor's wife, with heaven in his mouth. The gentleman's son discovers to his father these solicitations of the hypocrite, which he had overheard; and the lady owns and confirms them; but neither of them is believed: The poor bewitched man cries, you are all enemies to the godly *Tartuffe;* and tells him, that, to make him amends, he will give him his daughter, and settle his house and estate upon him. The will of the Lord be done, says the hypocrite. Accordingly, by an instant deed, to the apparent ruin of his family, he makes this godly villain heir of all he has, with a right of possession. He is afterwards convinced of *Tartuffe's* villainy; but when ashamed of himself, and enraged at the ingrate, he bid him get out of his house; No, sir, says *Tartuffe*, it is your turn to get out; the house is mine, and you shall know it; I will be revenged of you, in behalf of heaven, which you wound through my sides. Behold an orthodox pattern of the usual claim of divine right to the wages of villainy and delusion!

All this behaviour, and these speeches, were such manifest marks of the church, that all its genuine sons dreaded their coming upon the theatre. Their rogueries are all sacred, and must not be set to view.

Moliere, to take away as much as possible, all reasonable ground of clamour from the ecclesiasticks, had not so much as suggested in the play that *Tartuffe* was a priest; and only call-

ed his Comedy, the Impostor in general. Besides all this, he dressed up his rogue like a man of the world. He had not given him so much as a flapping beaver, but a smart secular cock, with a sword, a good head of hair, a cravat, and a gaudy coat. But all this precaution of *Moliere's* availed not; *Tartuffe* had the conduct, craft, and spirit of a priest, though disguised like a layman, and the clergy found themselves whipped upon *Tartuffe's* back.

Eight days after *Tartuffe* was forbid to be acted, the court was entertained with a very irreligious play, called *Scaramouch*. After it was over, the king told a certain prince, that he wonderdered why those people, who were so scandalized at *Moliere's* Comedy, did not say a word of this. O sir, answered the prince, the reason is plain; the play of *Scaramouch* only makes a jest of God and religion, in which these gentlemen are no wise concerned: but *Moliere* has dared to bring the priests upon the stage, which is not to be suffered.

Independent Whig, Vol. ii.

AMERICAN UNITARIANISM.

THE following extract from an excellent speech delivered by Mr. SALTONSTALL, of Salem, at a meeting of the American Unitarian Association, is recommended to our English Unitarians. No doubt can be entertained that if a stricter union existed among the Unitarians in each country, and there were more vigour and promptness in their exertions, there would be less cause to lament that no greater success attends their plans.

ED.

MR. SALTONSTALL expressed his satisfaction in the formation of this society, the great object of which is to diffuse the knowledge of the simple truths of the gospel, and which invites the union and co-operation of all those who believe in the simple unity of God, and who hold the same general views of Christianity; and he trusted that the third resolution, comprehensive

as it was, would receive the cordial approbation of all. He congratulated the meeting on the successful commencement of the Association, and upon its encouraging prospects. It is time, said he, that such a Society should be instituted. All other religious denominations have long been organized—they have their particular and general associations for the promotion of their own religious tenets—they act systematically and with great effect. But we should recollect that however widely they differ on some points, however hostile they may be to each other in some respects, most of them are ready to unite in denouncing our views of christianity, and in rendering them obnoxious. It is time therefore that we should unite in the open avowal and support of what we believe to be *the truth*. It is necessary to our self-defence that we should encourage each other, and render assistance to our friends, who are struggling with difficulties. If all others separate themselves from us and act against us, we must associate together, and we cannot justly be accused of a sectarian and proselyting spirit, for a union and co-operation thus imposed upon us. What else can promote our views of religion against such opposition and misrepresentation. The great object of this association is the diffusion of the truth. We hope to do this by spreading abroad religious knowledge—by communicating the means of information on religious subjects, and encouraging our fellow christians to use them. Those who differ from us well know that the circulation of tracts is an immense engine, they pour them forth in every form, in every direction—great and small—from the single page to the well-sized volume filling every place in society. But how different has been our conduct. There are many towns and villages even in this state, in which not a single Unitarian publication can be found. Great pains are taken to prevent their introduction—the minds of the people are filled with prejudice—they are taught to fear Unitarian, almost as much as infidel publications! Grossly ignorant of our faith they are afraid to inquire. And can we be quiet, and do nothing to correct their errors and misrepresentations concerning us and our faith. Give people a correct knowledge

of our faith, and their prejudices will vanish. Let people read, let them inquire, and if they do not embrace our views of religion, they will no longer dread them and denounce us as infidels. It is incumbent on us to furnish them with the means of knowledge. Let us not by our inertness justify a suspicion, that we do not feel deeply interested in the truths we profess to believe.

Christian Register.

QUERIES.

1. Is there any evidence in the New Testament, or to be derived from any other source, that the Apostles were in any proper sense inspired, except when they spoke or wrote predictions of what should take place?

2. Can the miraculous powers with which the Apostles were endowed, come under the meaning of inspiration; if not, in what light are we to regard those miraculous powers?

I shall esteem an answer to the above from any of your correspondents, a favour conferred on

JUNIUS.

THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

AMONG some kind of religionists there is as great an outcry about the Fathers of the Christian Church, as they are called, as among other classes there is about what is called Classical Learning, i. e. the knowledge of the Heathen Mythology, without which christianity is esteemed so mysterious that it cannot be understood. Now the Fathers are to the one what the classics, or Heathen Poets, &c. are to the other, and what has christianity to do with either? From the study of both she has been grossly corrupted. Who were the Fathers? Heathen Philosophers, who found their worldly interest in becoming christians, and did much in heathenizing christianity. The classics are the poets, and many of them exceedingly licentious in their writings, in the study of these our young men are trained up for the *christian* ministry.

"As to the Fathers, (says a clebrated writer,) there is so little to be learned from them, that they who know much of them, are only esteemed by such as know little of any thing. Nor was there ever any thing more insolent and dishonest, than to refer us, for the knowledge of the scriptures, to the Fathers, who were very ignorant of them, that they almost constantly understood them in every sense but the true sense. They have such an appetite for vision, mystery, and obscurity, that in the plainest texts they find difficulty, darkness, allusion, and enigmas; and explain obvious passages, just as they do doubtful ones, by far-fetched and mysterious guesses and meanings, which contradict common sense, and which none that had it would have thought of. A plain and natural meaning which every body could see, would not serve their turn; but they must extort a meaning, and so have the glory of the discovery; and their thoughts, like their language, were forced with bombast. And to these men, who made the word of God of none effect, by darkening his plainest precepts with false glosses and figures, we are sent for instruction in that word.

"Whoever has seen *Solomon's Temple allegorized* by *John Bunyan*, may find there a specimen of the sagacity and abilities of the Fathers in explaining of scripture. According to John, there was not a nail in that temple but had its typical purpose; and every bason and pair of tongs prefigured some great mystery to come; and, in short, every stone and every tool in the temple prophesied. And in all this the poor pious tinker did but tread in the steps of the Fathers, without knowing it. As he had much more honesty, and a more quiet and beneficent spirit than any of them, so he had as much invention, and was full as equal to the business of allegory, as the best of them, and his fancy was not more heated than theirs; and whoever reads his Pilgrim's Progress, need only suppose himself reading one of the brightest Fathers in English; and he will make them no ill compliment, for his imagination, which was a very good one, was really more regular and correct than theirs. I have often thought the *Rosicrucians* a sort of modern Fathers, only they are more sublime in their reveries. They deal alike in the same puffry, false rhetoric, and their imaginations are alike inflamed and extravagant."

From this, I think it is pretty plain that the Fathers were not the only depositories of wisdom, and that it descended with them into the tomb.

ALIQUIS.

INTELLIGENCE.

THE Rev. John Grundy has commenced a Course of Lectures, on Sunday Evenings, at the Unitarian Chapel, Paradise Street, Liverpool.

The following are the Subjects.

1827.

Nov. 18. The nature and causes of Atheism.
„ 25. The arguments used by Atheists; their folly and effects.
Dec. 2. The existence of a Deity.
„ 9. The power of the Deity to work miracles, and the probability that he would *sometimes* exercise that power.
„ 16. The nature and value of testimony.
„ 23. The applicability of human testimony to miracles.
„ 30. A lecture is expected to be delivered by the *Rev. Mr. Beard, of Manchester.*

1828.

Jan. 6. The state of the world at the time of the appearance of Jesus Christ, and the probability of a miraculous interference of the Deity at that time.
„ 13. The evidence of testimony as applied to Christianity, and the *genuineness* of the books of the New Testament.
„ 20. The *authenticity* of the books of the New Testament.
„ 27. Their *genuineness* and *authenticity* conjointly.
Feb. 3. Criteria of distinction between *true* and *pretended* miracles.
„ 10. The truth of the Gospel miracles proved from the *common* facts.
„ 17. Other *direct* proof of their truth.
„ 24. The *public* death of Jesus Christ as preparatory to the grand *miracle*—His Resurrection.
March 2. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
„ 9. Remarks on our Saviour's Resurrection and Ascension.

A Course of Lectures will be delivered in the Unitarian Meeting House, Hunter Street, Liverpool, on Sunday Evenings.—By F. B. Wright, To commence on the 2nd of December.

The following are the Subjects.

1827.

Dec. 2. The design of religious institutions before the christian era.
„ 9. The design of the mission of Jesus of Nazareth.
„ 16. The designs of the death of Christ.
„ 23. The Gospel the power of God to salvation.
„ 30. The rapid flight of time.

1828.

Jan. 6. The object of religious worship must be one undivided person or being.
„ 13. The true worshipers.
„ 20. Omniscience the attribute of Jehovah only.
„ 27. Jesus the Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory.
Feb. 3. The character of Jesus as a Saviour.
„ 10. The character of Jesus as a Mediator.

Feb. 17. The inferiority and subordination of Jesus to the Father.
„ 24. The Sonship of Jesus subversive of the doctrine of the Deity of Jesus.
March 2. Eternal life the gift of God.
„ 9. The mercy of God the foundation of the sinner's hope.
„ 16. The means by which the hope of the christian may be cherished and kept alive.
„ 23. Obedience to the precepts of Jesus the best and only test of the christian character.

The Rev. Robert Cree of Preston, has accepted the invitation to become the pastor of the Unitarian Church at Bridport, to succeed the late Rev. G. B. Wawne. Mr. C. will remove at the close of the year.

Unitarianism in the East Indies.

A LETTER has been received from the Rev. WILLIAM ADAM, of Calcutta, announcing that, in consequence of the liberality of the British and American Unitarians, he had resumed the character of a Missionary, and intends to devote himself wholly to the work. We hope soon to announce the completion of the first Unitarian chapel in the East Indies.

Communications have been received also from Mr. WILLIAM ROBERTS, of Madras, in which he describes his native schools and church as in a good state and relates a conference between him and some Trinitarian missionaries, in which he seems to have applied the Scriptures with judgment and effect. His spirits have been much cheered by some recent letters from England.

Obituary.

WE lately had the painful task to record the death of a valuable countryman, the Rev. Robert Little, who died in America; we have now to announce the death of another who was equally esteemed, and deservedly so;

ROBERT TAYLOR, M. D.

who died on the 12th of September last, at the house of Mr. Thos. Swanwick, Kaskaskia, Indiana Territory, United States. Dr. Taylor was well known in Liverpool, where he resided for a short time, and much better in his native place, Bolton, where he spent the greater part of his life. He was most conspicuously and honourably active in unravelling the conspiracies made against the liberties of the people, by means of government and police spies, in the manufacturing districts of this county. The ardour of his feelings led him to engage with the utmost zeal in detecting and exposing these horrible machinations, and he thereby drew upon himself great odium from the Tory party, who at that period carried matters with a high hand at Bolton. This circumstance, combined with the gloom which then hung over the prospects of the country, induced him to retire from England to America, where his life has been cut short by typhus fever. He was a man of excellent talents, of extensive practice in his profession, and of great influence in his own town and neighbourhood.

POETRY.

SELECTED.

THE EVENING HYMN OF THE TYROLESE PEASANTS.

(From the New Monthly Magazine.)

"Der lieben feuër stunde schleckt."

THE hour of soft repose is near,
Its loved tones steal upon the ear
With sweetly soothing sound;
Again from care and toil we're free!
Come, let us to the sunset tree.
With light and joyous bound.

Come, let us to its pleasant shade,
And couch us on the mossy glade
Where many a wild flower blows.
How sweet, how dear is labour's rest!
How pure, how exquisite its zest!
How calm the hind's repose!

They who recline on beds of down,
And rest from toil have never known,
Our pity only share;
Fatigued with ease, their languid powers
Feel not the charm of sleep like ours,
They wake alone to care.

Sweet is the hour of our repose
When day hath smiled its farewell close,
And sweet the Sabbath's rest!
But sweeter far that soothing balm,
That lengthen'd Sabbath's promised calm,
In mansions of the blest!

There in our heavenly Father's sight,
Released from toil, of burdens light
We shall true rest enjoy;
There shall we faint not, feel no pain:
There sorrow, sin, assail in vain,
And bliss shall never cloy!

A FUNERAL HYMN.

(From Heber.)

BENEATH our feet and o'er our head
Is equal warning given;
Beneath us lie the countless dead,
Above us is the heaven!

Their names are graven on the stone,
Their bones are in the clay;
And ere another day is gone,
Ourselves may be as they.

Death rides on every passing breeze,
He lurks in every flower;
Each season has its own disease,
Its peril every hour!

Our eyes have seen the rosy light
Of youth's soft cheek decay,
And Fate descend in sudden night
On manhood's middle day.

Our eyes have seen the steps of age
Halt feebly towards the tomb,
And yet shall earth our hearts engage,
And dreams of days to come?

Turn mortal, turn! thy danger know;
Where'er thy foot can tread
The earth rings hollow from below,
And warns thee of her dread!

Turn Christian, turn! thy soul apply
To truths divinely given;
The bones that underneath thee lie
Shall live for Hell or Heaven!

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We thank our friend G. for a beautiful translation of Horace's Ode on "The insufficiency of Riches and Honours to confer Happiness." It was too late for our present Number, but shall have a place in our next.

W.'s, suggestion respecting a celebrated Dialogue between a Quaker and a Reverend exacter of Tithes, shall not be lost sight of. Eugenio *and* Theophilus *in our next.*

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